

General Manager
of the Divi Aruba
Phoenix Resort

Tourism icon GM John Neophytou passes away



PALM BEACH - Our friend John Neophytou, lost his battle with cancer, and passed away on Tuesday night, Dec 7, 2010 at approximately 9:40 p.m. in his Aruban residence at the Divi Links with family by his side. John was the General Manager of the Divi Phoenix Resort including the popular Pure Beach. John leaves behind his wife Leddi Ann Neophytou, Son: Cole John Neophytou, Parents: Mr. Elias & Loulla Neophytou, Brother: James Neophytou & wife Elena, Nephew & God Son: Paul James Neophytou, Close Family Friends & Best Friends: Dr. Harold & Lydi Hagens, Dr. Patrick & Dorothy Haime, Dr. Timothy & Rosanna Peterson, Mr. Ray & Filomena Perez, all his friends and colleagues of Mega Resort and the entire island of Aruba where he chose to spend the last days of his life.

Continued on Page A7

TECH SUPPORT

"Hacktivists" attack MasterCard, Visa websites

In this Dec.11, 2009 file photo, a sign for MasterCard credit cards is shown on the entrance to a bank, in New York. Mastercard is having severe technical problem Wednesday, Dec. 8, 2010, possibly a target by supporters of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange.

*Associated Press
PAGE B9*

Blazing protests demand carnival singer lead Haiti

Supporters of presidential candidate Michel Martelly demonstrate in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Wednesday Dec. 8, 2010. Supporters of eliminated candidates protested after officials announced that government protege Jude Celestin and former first lady Mirlande Manigat would advance to a runoff in presidential elections.

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ROCHESTER, N.Y. — With snow piled up waist- and shoulder-high in communities downwind of the Great Lakes, Annette Miller took her usual walk in the woods with her golden retriever Wednesday in search of the solitude and vigor the season offers in spades in upstate New York.

"I love every mood of winter," the 61-year-old retired businesswoman said after tramping for nearly an hour along the Lake Ontario shore in suburban Rochester. "You adjust to it. I'm out in it, my dog gets me out. Otherwise you're stuck in the house for months."

For a fourth straight day, lake-fed

Relentless lake-effect snow piles up in Pa., NY

storms pounded parts of northwestern Pennsylvania and upstate New York. Close to four feet of snow have fallen in the Syracuse area since the weekend and forecasters called for more snow into Thursday. Dozens of schools in and around Syracuse were closed as police reported numerous accidents on highways and roads. Troopers said an accident involving three tractor-trailers on the New York State Thruway just west of Syracuse closed the highway's westbound lanes for about five hours Tuesday night.

The National Weather Service said Wednesday morning the most snow 47 inches was recorded in suburban Clay. Two other upstate locations had upward of 4 feet by Wednesday morning, the weather service said: Randolph in New York's southwest corner and Laconia, near Lake Ontario's eastern end.

"I've had about seven hours off since Sunday, and that's with four trucks," tow truck driver Clay Russell said Wednesday morning as he helped a woman with a flat tire on Syracuse's snowbound west side. "And it's not even winter yet."

Intense lake-effect snowstorms are typical for late fall and early winter,

when cold air rushes over warmer water. The threat is lessened later in the season when ice forms on the lakes. Mitch Gilt, a weather service meteorologist in Binghamton, said the current weather pattern started out as a low-pressure system that swept through the Great Lakes region before stalling over eastern Canada, combined with winds out of the northwest that spawned the bands of snow blowing off lakes Erie and Ontario.

By Thursday afternoon, between 50 inches and 60 inches of snow will have fallen on some places, he said.

"It's probably going to fall somewhere in the top two or three lake-effect snow events they've had in Syracuse, at least since they've keeping records up at the airport," he said.

The driving conditions along Interstate 90 in the Syracuse area went from "terrible" to "not too bad" in the span of just a couple of hours, according to state police. But given the fickle nature of lake-effect storms, conditions could get worse quickly.

"Call me back in five minutes and it will be different, depending on where the wind direction is coming from," said Sgt. Robin Urbaniak.

A lake-effect snow warning was in effect for Chautauqua and Cattaraugus counties south of Buffalo and in McKean County, Pa., just across the state line. Forecasters said 5 to 8 more inches of snow was possible during the day Wednesday, with another 5 to 8 inches possible overnight.

In Pennsylvania, the tiny northwestern towns of Blooming Valley had 35 inches of snow and Corry had 31 inches, with more expected Wednesday. Police responded to several accidents caused by slippery roads or reports of large trucks having difficulty navigating steep hills. No serious injuries were reported. But folks in the small towns south of Buffalo, N.Y., and Erie, Pa., are used to big snows, so schools in Corry were only on a two-hour delay Wednesday. Still, it was a little early in the season to get so much snow, said the town's administrator, Gerry Dahl.

"Winter did not allow us much of a period of adjustment. It just arrived," Dahl told the AP on Wednesday.

He said there are 11 people who plow the town of about 5 square miles. On Tuesday, they sent the workers home to get some rest because they had been working around the clock. □



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Clues in Ill. mom's disappearance include slipper

RANSOM, Ill. — The clues surrounding Tanya Shannon sound like the makings of a fairy tale: a red dress, a lone slipper, footprints in the snow. For friends and relatives of the northern Illinois mother of four, who vanished after a weekend car crash killed her husband, they're the makings of a nightmare.

Shannon was last seen leaving a friend's holiday party in her red dress and was believed to be riding with her husband when their car crashed a short time later as it snowed. A deputy found the wreck along a well-traveled stretch of highway early Sunday 41-year-old Dale Shannon was dead behind the wheel and footprints led away from the car.

Other than the slipper found a short ways away, there has been no other sign of Tanya Shannon. She had apparently

changed out of her heels for the ride home.

"It's just one of those weird situations," said Sergeant Jeff Whalen of the LaSalle County Sheriff's office. "We have no idea what happened."

Before the foot search was suspended Tuesday evening, dozens of people braved frigid temperatures for a third day to scour an area just miles from the couple's home in Ransom. They probed snow banks with poles, operated metal detectors in ditches and even used a helicopter over the flat, snow-covered landscape about 70 miles southwest of Chicago.

The investigation will continue as a missing person case until the weather warms up, said LaSalle County Sheriff Tom Templeton.

Authorities say Shannon, a part-time waitress, may be dead and her body may be

buried in the snow, but they also haven't ruled out the possibility that she's still alive. Authorities believe Shannon may have tried going for help and could have been picked up along the road.

"We just want her home," said Shannon's sister Corinne Johnson of Ottawa. "I just want to find her."

Johnson said she last heard from Shannon through a text message around 9:45 p.m. Saturday when Shannon was apparently at the party. It read, "I can text ya 2morrow at dales xmas party all dressed up." Johnson said she and her sister talked about the condition of the roads before the party, and that Shannon said she wasn't afraid to drive, especially since she had lived in Illinois for twenty years.

At first, Johnson said she thought the disappearance was due to "something silly."



But she said she changed her mind as crews searched for a third day Tuesday without finding any clues.

"I wasn't thinking something drastic like this," Johns said. "She just wouldn't walk away from this, this is her life." More than 35 searchers carefully scanned the area near the crash site. With temperatures hovering around

20 degrees, searchers on foot went out for only an hour at a time, coming back to a command center to warm up and get their blood pressure checked.

The couple's four children who range in age from 4 to 15 years old are in the care of family.

"The kids are doing as well as expected," Johnson said. □



WASHINGTON — The United States has fallen from top of the class to average in world education rankings, said a report Tuesday that warned of US economic losses from the trend. The three-yearly OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) report, which compares the knowledge and skills of 15-year-

olds in 70 countries around the world, ranked the United States 14th out of 34 OECD countries for reading skills, 17th for science and a below-average 25th for mathematics. In Canada, 15-year-olds are more than one school year ahead of their US peers in math and more than half a school year ahead in reading and science,

US falls to average in education ranking

said the report released hours after President Barack Obama urged Americans not to rein in education spending, even in a tough economy.

The OECD report also noted that investment in education is paid back many times over.

Boosting US scores for reading, math and science by 25 points over the next 20 years would result in a gain of 41 trillion dollars for the United States economy over the lifetime of the generation born in 2010, the OECD said.

"Bringing the United States up to the average performance of Finland, the best-performing education system among OECD countries, could result in gains in the order of 103 trillion dollars," said the report.

"This is not to say that efforts

should not be directed towards mitigating the short-term effects of the economic recession, but it is to say that long-term issues should not be neglected," it said. The first step towards helping the United States climb back up the education rankings to the top of the class would be to convince Americans "to make the choices needed to show that (they) value education more than other areas of national interest," the report said.

Currently, 18 percent of US 15-year-olds do not reach an OECD-set level of of reading proficiency, compared to 10 percent in China-Shanghai and Hong Kong, which are compared with countries because of the size of their populations, said the report.

The United States has also fallen

behind in the percentage of 15-year-olds who are enrolled in school, ranking third from bottom of the OECD countries, above only Mexico and Turkey. Only eight OECD countries have a lower high school graduation rate than the United States, and in college education, the United States slipped from second to 13th between 1995 and 2008 -- not because US college graduation rates declined, but because they rose so much faster in other OECD countries. "These developments will be amplified over the coming decades as countries such as China and India raise their educational output at an ever-increasing pace," the report said, stressing the need for Americans to invest in education. □

Egg sales rebound after huge recall



CAMPAIGN, Ill. — Sales of eggs have rebounded after a sharp drop in the weeks following the August recall of 550 million eggs potentially contaminated with salmonella. The upswing is a relief to egg producers, but industry leaders said they thought sales would return to normal as the recall by two Iowa farms faded from memory. The industry also spent about \$1 million on an ad campaign emphasizing its commitment to food safety. “I think that ad campaign and what we did was really effective,” said Jacques Klempf, president of the Jacksonville, Fla.-based Dixie Egg Company, one of the country’s largest egg producers. “We hit all the major markets and tried our best to put (out) some science and some reason.” Immediately after the recall, producers were more concerned. Retail egg sales for the month

that ended Sept. 5 were down 9 percent from mid-summer, before the recall, according to data from SymphonyIRI Group, which tracks sales of food and other products. People bought 108.3 million units or packages of any kind, including dozen and half-dozen cartons — making it the slowest month in at least two years.

But SymphonyIRI told The Associated Press that by the first of November, sales were back up to 114 million units a month. That’s just under sales a year earlier and a little more than sales during the month before the recall.

The egg industry reacted quickly with its ad campaign and other steps to limit what it feared could be a serious problem.

The American Egg Board bought full-page ads in USA Today, The Wall Street Journal and a couple dozen other newspapers and publications,

all emphasizing food safety, said Cindy McGarrigle, a vice president with the Park Ridge, Ill.-based group.

The board also provided a dietitian for interviews about egg safety with radio and TV stations around the country, and it started surveying consumers.

“Obviously we wanted to gauge the changes in consumer attitudes,” McGarrigle said. “We kept seeing improvement in the areas measured.”

Grocers, too, took immediate steps to limit the damage.

“We got signs up quick saying we bought all our eggs from these particular egg farms and they were not affected,” said Mark Brase, vice president of marketing for Dahl’s Foods, a Des Moines, Iowa-based grocery store chain. “We were not affected by the recall at all.”

Still, the biggest factor might have been the ubiquity of the egg. People count on it to make waffles, bread and myriad other foods that many can’t do without.

“It was one of those things we bit the bullet,” said Justin Arbogast, a 29-year-old Champaign, Ill., chef who works at a University of Illinois sorority house and

cooks a Sunday brunch with French toast, omelets and other egg-heavy dishes every week. “We just had to have them.”

Americans also tend to have short memories. After media attention dies down, there is a general faith among consumers that problems will be solved.

“We always think, ‘Oh wow, this is a big deal,’” said Ben Jackson, an agricultural economist with IHS Global Insight, an economic forecasting firm based in Philadelphia. “I think it was just really things getting back to normal. We’ve seen this with spinach and lettuce and various things.”

Not all egg producers suffered, with at least some specialty companies reporting stronger sales.

Charlie Lanktree, the chief executive officer of Jeffersonville, Pa.-based Eggland’s Best, said he took a number of calls after the recall was announced. Grocers wanted to know if Eggland, which specializes in organic, cage-free and other non-traditional eggs, could offer its products to replace traditional eggs that weren’t selling well. “What they basically said

is, ‘Hey, listen. We’re a little nervous about doing anything on generic eggs. Can we work with Eggland’s Best on some extra promotion?’”

Although the drop in sales was short-lived, some producers said it has convinced them to change their approach to food safety. They also noted the implementation of tighter standards mandated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

Dixie Egg hired a full-time director of food safety after the recall, combining work that had been split among several other people who also had other jobs, Klempf said. “It’s a different ball game out there right now.”

And it’s clear that not all consumers expect to return to their old buying habits.

Mary Bailey said she now only buys organic eggs from hens not kept in cages. In the past, she bought the least expensive eggs she can find. As she shopped this week at a grocery store in Champaign, Ill., the 67-year-old retired nursing professor said she doesn’t believe conventional egg producers are safe enough. “I’ll even pay a dollar or two dollars more,” she said. “The other ones are too scary.” □

HIV-positive LA porn actor calls for condom use

LOS ANGELES — An adult film actor who tested positive for HIV says he now wishes he had known more about the risks of contracting sexually transmitted diseases in the industry and is calling for mandatory condom use in porn films.

Derrick Burts, 24, identified himself to the Los Angeles Times as the performer who tested positive at the Adult Industry Medical Healthcare Foundation in Sherman Oaks in October. He had previously been known as Patient Zeta.

Burts, who performed in straight films as Cameron Reid and gay films as Derek Chambers, described the panicked call he got from clinic staff on Oct. 9 about the infection that sent fears through California’s adult industry.

Clinic staff told him they wanted to perform a follow-up test and begin notifying performers he had worked with since his last negative test result Sept. 3. He was told those performers would be placed on a quarantine list and also would be tested.

When Burts returned to the clinic Oct. 23 to review the second test results, he said he

was told that the clinic had traced his HIV infection to someone he had performed a scene with, someone they described as a “known positive.” The clinic would not identify the performer because of patient confidentiality.

Burts said he believed he may have contracted the disease during a gay porn shoot in Florida. Despite Burts’ account of what he was told, clinic officials released a statement last month that said “Patient Zeta acquired the virus through private, personal activity.”

“That’s completely false,” Burts told the Times. “There is no possible way. The only person I had sex with in my personal life was my girlfriend.”

She tested negative, he said.

An e-mail to the Adult Industry Healthcare Foundation seeking comment late Tuesday was not immediately returned.

Burts said the clinic promised to put him in touch with a doctor affiliated with the clinic and promised to arrange for his follow-up care. But he said no one called him back and when he contacted the clinic, he received no response for two months. □

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Obama facing tough sell in own party on tax deal

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama on Wednesday rejected claims that he betrayed Democrats by cutting a deal with Republicans on Bush-era tax cuts and implored his party to back the compromise, arguing it could jump-start the economy.

Speaking to reporters at a joint appearance with Polish President Bronislaw Komorowski, Obama said economists predict higher job growth in 2011 and 2012 if Congress passes the agreement and urged lawmakers to examine the details of the deal and “get this done.”

The White House has been leaning hard on fellow Democrats to support the tax deal that would extend the cuts at all income levels for two years, extend jobless benefits for the long-term unemployed and cut the Social Security payroll tax for a year.

But House Democratic leaders protest that the overall package gives up too much to the wealthy. They’re putting Obama on the defensive, even as the deal picks up support among GOP lawmakers and business groups.

The president forcefully rejected suggestions he had abandoned his allies to strike an agreement with the GOP.

“I think it is inaccurate to characterize Democrats, writ large, as quote-unquote betrayed,” he said.

Obama was sending Vice President Joe Biden to Capitol Hill Wednesday afternoon to urge resistant House Democrats to support the package. Biden lobbied Senate Democrats on Tuesday.

Some Democrats are unhappy that Obama agreed to extend expiring tax cuts not just for the middle class but also for higher earners, and that he agreed to impose a lower estate tax on wealthy heirs. Both provisions are seen by many Democrats as giveaways to the rich that will do little to help the economy.

In return, Democrats would get extended jobless benefits for people who have been unemployed for long stretches. Workers would also see their share of Social Security payroll taxes cut by nearly a third for the coming year, a boost in take-home pay meant to encourage spending and aid the economy.

“So far, the response has not been very good,” House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said. She called the estate tax provision “a bridge too far.”

If Democrats kill the package, it would mark a stunning defeat for Obama and a huge political bet that voters will blame Republicans as much as Democrats for an impasse that would lead to higher taxes starting Jan. 1. Many congressional insiders doubt that Democrats will take that gamble. But liberal lawmakers’ discontent is hard to measure in the wake of last month’s big election setbacks. The potential for additional job growth was a key talking point at the White House Wednesday and officials released independent economic analyses that supported their contention that the agreement would contribute to economic expansion.



“This is the right thing to do,” Obama said. “I expect everybody to examine it carefully. When they do, I think they’re going to feel confident that this is the right course while understanding that for the next two years, we’re going to have a big debate about taxes.”

Senior White House adviser David Axelrod said Wednesday he believes disenchanted Democrats will decide to vote for the package when they realize how angry voters will be “if they wake up on Jan. 1” with a substantial tax increase, roughly \$3,000 a year for a typical family.

He said Obama had no choice but to accede to Republican demands for continuing existing rates for the wealthy in order to spare higher rates for the middle class. He also said the president was forced to make concessions to protect the jobless.

In an interview on NBC’s “Today” show, he said it would be “borderline immoral” to allow taxes to go up in the midst of economic hard times. If Congress fails to act this month, taxpayers at every income level face a significant tax increase at the start of the year.

The new Congress with Republicans controlling the House and Democrats the Senate still could extend the tax cuts retroactively next year. But that would make it difficult for employers to withhold the proper amount of taxes from workers’ pay.

Payroll companies say it’s already too late for many employers to adjust withholding by the start of the year, meaning many workers will have to make adjustments, regardless of what Congress does.

Despite their minority status, Senate Republicans last

week blocked Obama’s long-promised bid to end Bush-era tax cuts for households earning more than \$250,000. Republicans insisted that all the tax cuts be extended, for rich and poor alike.

Under the proposal cutting back Social Security payroll taxes, workers would pay a 4.2 percent tax rate instead of 6.2 percent a \$120 billion tax cut for workers, starting on Jan. 1.

Households making between \$40,000 and \$50,000 would get an average tax cut of \$810 next year, according to an analysis by the Tax Policy Center, a Washington research group. Households making between \$100,000 and \$200,000 would get an average tax cut of \$2,162.

The package would continue other programs such as enhanced tuition tax credits and tax breaks for businesses that hire new workers. □

Officials: Man who spoke of jihad arrested in plot



A woman walks past the Armed Forces Career Center in Catonsville, Md. Wednesday, Dec. 8, 2010. Antonio Martinez, also known as Muhammad Hussain, faces charges of attempted murder and attempted use of a weapon of mass destruction after authorities say he tried to detonate what he thought was a bomb at this military recruitment center near Baltimore.

(AP Photo/Steve Ruark)

By BEN NUCKOLS,
Associated Press

BALTIMORE — A 21-year-old construction worker who had recently converted to Islam and told an FBI informant he thought about nothing but jihad was arrested Wednesday when he tried to detonate what he thought was a bomb at a military recruitment center, authorities said.

Antonio Martinez, a naturalized U.S. citizen also known as Muhammad

Hussain, faces charges of attempted murder of federal officers and attempted use of a weapon of mass destruction, according to court documents filed Wednesday.

The bomb he is accused of trying to detonate was fake and had been provided by an undercover FBI agent.

It was the second time in less than two weeks that a young man was arrested trying to detonate what he thought was a bomb during a sting

operation.

“There was never any actual danger to the public during this operation this morning,” U.S. Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein said Wednesday after a hearing in U.S. District Court in Baltimore. “That’s because the FBI was controlling the situation.”

Martinez appeared in court Wednesday afternoon and was ordered held until a hearing Monday.

According to court documents, he has been on the FBI’s radar screen since October, when he told a confidential FBI source he wanted to attack and kill military personnel. Investigators believed Martinez posed a genuine threat and that he came up with the plan by himself.

“The investigation was undertaken only because experts had made the determination that there was a real risk,” Rosenstein said.

The case is similar to one in Portland, Ore., where authorities said they arrested a Somali-born teenager the day after Thanksgiving when he used a cell phone to try

to detonate what he thought were explosives in a van. He intended to bomb a crowded downtown Christmas tree-lighting ceremony, but the people he had been communicating with about the plot were in fact FBI agents. After Martinez found out about that case, he called the FBI informant he had been plotting with and expressed reservations about their plan, according to court documents. “I’m not falling for no b.s.,” court documents quote him as saying.

But he ultimately decided to continue with the plot. On Wednesday he drove an SUV with the dummy bomb to the recruiting center and parked outside the building, authorities said.

When he attempted to detonate the device, he was arrested.

During Wednesday’s hearing, Martinez told the judge he could not afford an attorney. He said he works in construction, is married and understood the charges against him.

Asked to identify himself, he said he was Muhammad Hussain but confirmed

Antonio Martinez is still his legal name.

Afterward, Joseph Balter, the public defender assigned to represent him, cautioned against a rush to judgment.

“It’s very, very early in this case,” he said.

Authorities did not say where Martinez was born or what prompted his conversion to Islam. According to court documents, he explained to the FBI informant that his mother did not approve of how he had chosen to live. His wife, he said, accepted his lifestyle.

“I told her I want to fight jihad ... and she said she doesn’t want to stop me,” he said, adding that he was glad he was not like other people his age, going out or going to school. “That’s not me ... that not what Allah has in mind for me.”

Martinez lives in a working-class northwest Baltimore neighborhood in a tidy, three-story yellow house that’s been divided into apartments. No one answered the door Wednesday afternoon. □

Father, son convicted in fatal Ore. bank bombing

By JONATHAN J. COOPER,
Associated Press

SALEM, Ore. — A father and son were convicted Wednesday of planting a bank bomb that killed two police officers in a botched robbery that prosecutors said was motivated by plans to build a militia in case newly elected President Barack Obama cracked down on their gun rights.

A Marion County Circuit Court jury deliberated for less than a day before finding both Bruce Turnidge and his son, Joshua Turnidge, guilty on all 18 counts, which included aggravated murder, attempted aggravated murder and assault charges.

Both stood silently as the verdicts were read. The convictions send the trial into a penalty phase that would begin Thursday, when the jury will decide whether to send the men to death row.

Other sentencing options include life in prison with the possibility of parole after 30

years or a life sentence with no parole.

Kelly Mix, a brother-in-law of one of the officers killed, Woodburn Police Lt. Tom Tennant, said he was pleased with the verdict. “Look forward to having it behind us, not surprised by the outcome,” added Mix, who said he had attended the two-month trial regularly, except on days when he knew there would be graphic testimony.

The homemade bomb exploded at the West Coast Bank in Woodburn less than two weeks before Christmas 2008, killing a police bomb technician who was trying to dismantle it, as well as Tennant, who was helping. The town’s police chief lost a leg in the explosion, which authorities say was part of an attempt to rob the bank.

Prosecutors had presented evidence that the Turnidges harbored fantasies of building bombs, robbing banks and starting a militia. They hatched the bank robbery plan

because they needed money to keep their biodiesel company afloat, prosecutors said.

Witnesses testified that Bruce Turnidge, who grew up in a prominent farming family in the Willamette Valley but could not make a go of farming himself, wanted to live in a tent city with people who shared his political beliefs but couldn’t get money to build an arms stockpile for a militia.

According to testimony, father and son exulted in the Oklahoma City bombing, and Bruce Turnidge viewed Timothy McVeigh as a hero. Prosecutors also said both men believed the Obama administration would crack down on their rights to own guns. The attack occurred about a month after Obama was elected.

The father and son turned against each other during the trial, but their lawyers came together to throw the blame for detonating the blast on state police bomb technician William Hakim,



Bruce Turnidge listens during the last session of the day, the ‘exceptions to jury instructions’, Tuesday, Dec. 7, 2010 in Marion County Circuit Court in Salem, Ore. Bruce Turnidge and his son Joshua Turnidge are charged with aggravated murder for setting the Dec. 12, 2008 bomb in a Woodburn bank that killed two police officers and maimed Woodburn Police Chief Scott Russell.

(AP Photo/Brent Wojahn, Pool)

who mistakenly identified the green-painted metal box as a hoax.

A bank employee testified Hakim was hammering and prying on the box when it exploded.

Prosecutors argued that a stray

radio signal, perhaps from a passing trucker, activated a remote-controlled device that triggered the bomb.

Bruce Turnidge did not take the stand, but family members denied he hated police or held extremist political views. □



Tourism icon GM John Neophytou passes away

Continued from Front Page

John managed a variety of hotels and resorts in the Caribbean and Mexico for the past 20 years. His experiences included all-inclusive resorts, a combination of all-inclusive and European Plan, An Exclusive Golf Resort with Hotel and Rental Homes and a large-scale marina and resort.

He managed moderate to luxury resorts, corporate properties, Board Directed properties and individual owned properties around the world and has overseen from 100 - 600 employees at a time. All properties that he managed have shown profit, even during crises years. Most importantly he had great people skills and had always related well to staff, guests, club members and community organizations.

Prior to his most recent position as General Manager at the Divi Aruba Resorts, he was partner at Carpe Diem Hospitality Services, and previously V.P. Operations Abaco Beach Resort and started his hotelier life on Aruba at General Manager Holiday Inn Aruba back in 1998.

Friends are invited for a viewing on Thursday, December 9th and Friday December 10th, from 7 to 9 pm at Aurora Funeral Home. On request of the deceased cremation will take place in Curacao. There will be a box available for donation to the Edmund Harms Foundation John was a dear friend of ours. Many condolences to his family and we will all miss him very much, Rest in Peace John. □

Miss Universe Aruba captures a Boa Constrictor

Aruba trains for Boa capture events



Miss Aruba Gillain Berry is pictured handing over a bagged Boa to Diego Marquez, the instructor and chairman of the Taskforce Boa Constrictor! She really made it look so easy; thank you Miss Universe Aruba!

ORANJESTAD - The Boa Constrictor Taskforce, instated by the Government of Aruba, is making an appeal to one and all to participate at the Boa capturing training events. These instruction events are designed to educate volunteers how to capture Boa constrictors with every day domestic tools such as brooms, gardening gloves and trash bags. The first national Boa constrictor capturing event will take place on December 12th, 2010. More information will be released shortly as to this event.

The next instruction evening is scheduled for tonight, Thursday, December 9th, 2010, from 8 PM to 9 PM at the Centro di Barrio Savaneta. During this instruction event, volunteers will be trained how to capture the Boas as well as how to prepare for the actual capturing event. During these instruction sessions, information will also be given as to the locations where the national capturing event will take place. The Taskforce is



counting on a large group of volunteers to give a hand to help protect Aruba's fauna. You can help make a difference with this very serious challenge. We thank you for your cooperation. □



This evening at the first Boa instruction event, the first volunteer to practice catching a Boa Constrictor was the 13 year old Austin Arends. He caught the snake and bagged it in under 60 seconds! Austin is a role model for us all.

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A special day for Gloria Rooney and Larry Sullivan



EAGLE BEACH - Larry and Gloria met in Toronto many years ago. After going their separate ways for decades, they re-met and began their relationship a few years ago in Prince Edward Island, Canada. They chose Aruba as the place to make their union official as Aruba has been a special place for Gloria and Larry where they vacationed at annually for a few years already. Having made many friends here, they thought it would be the ideal place for their wedding.

Joined by family and friends from Canada, USA, and La Cabana, they made their marriage legal in the civil town hall in Oranjestad, and the union was blessed by Reverend Jacob on Nov. 24, 2010 at sunset on the beach in front of the Amsterdam Manor Beach Resort between the beautiful Fofoti Trees! After this blessing they proceeded to La Cabana for the reception! Gloria and Larry would like to thank Lissy Lampe, Reverend Jacob, Janette Brooks and the La Cabana staff for ensuring that a most beautiful day was had by all! □



Employee Training The Mill Resort & Suites



PALM BEACH - During the month of November, The Mill Resort & Suites together with The Art of Dining Service Management practiced within 4 sessions an intensive training for all employees. The training was based on

two parts which were motivation and mastering customer service. Management would like to congratulate the team of The Mill who has taken part of this exciting training. A word of gratitude also goes to Mr.

Monrick Croes from The Art of Dining Service Management who has put into practice these 4 sessions. The plan is to continue with these trainings in the future to improve the service provided at The Mill. □

Palm Beach boasts authentic Mediterranean cuisine



By ARUBA TODAY

PALM BEACH -- When we say Mediterranean cuisine, we mean the food from the adjacent nation-states sharing the shores of the Mediterranean, embracing many cultures and influenced by varied customs.

At Casa Tua Mediterranea, the menu offers a trip around that sunshiny, lively part of the world, without ever having to buy an airline ticket, starting at the Atlantic and traveling traverse Europe to Turkey, on to the Middle East and North Africa.

We discovered that the chefs choose the best, most delicious dishes from France, Italy,

Greece, and Tunisia, and paired them with most famous Middle-Eastern appetizers and salads to present a formidable culinary trip around the Mediterranean Sea, enjoyed in the contemporary indoor dining room which includes a cozy lounge area or on the dining terrace overlooking the action at the new bustling Palm Beach Plaza.

Spanokopitakia, brick oven baked filo pastries filled with Greek cheese and spinach, famous Tzaziki, a yogurt and cucumber dip, and popular Babaganoush and Hummus, with authentic pita bread, are some of the most popular appetizers.

For main courses our traditional Moussaka is justly called, the best you will ever have, and the genuine Tunisian Couscous, loaded with merguez, chicken and lamb, is rivaled only by the Tenderloin, Lamb and Chicken kebabs. Casa Tua pays homage to provincial



cooking with our Grilled Whole Red Snapper, flavored with herbs de Provence, and our Mussels, taste the way they're served in the port of Marseille. Our thin crust Italian Pizza, needs no introduction, as it has earned a huge following in both the other restaurants, Casa Tua Pizzeria and Casa Tua Barcelona.

To top off the authentic Mediterranean feast, the Oriental belly dancers entertain every night and you may complement the exotic evening with a flavored hookah pipe and endless new st le cocktails featuring Strawberry Field Mojito, and Bubble Royal Champagne Martin.

Casa Tua is your-home-in-Aruba, a perfect spot for people who love to live, and love to eat and party.

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Read ARUBA TODAY every day

Gala Dinner Dance for Radisson Colleagues



Palm Beach – The Radisson Aruba Resort, Casino & Spa celebrated the achievements of 2010 at a year-end gala party at the Grand Ballroom of the Westin Resort Aruba in the presence of all colleagues and all members of management. The festive occasion featured a holiday buffet loaded with seasonal favorites, open bar and dance music by Tsunami, Aruba's hottest dance band. □



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Maggy's beauty consultants celebrate the holidays



PALM BEACH – The professionals in charge of hair, make-up and cosmetics at Maggy's Paseo Herencia caught their breath, between clients, and booked a large table at Amazonia Churrascaria ready to enjoy

some down-time and great food, in community.

They started with the lavish, just refreshed salad bar, sampled continuously from the grilled meats and concluded with festive dessert, for an evening of fun, Brazilian-

style.

The company which is Aruba's most popular beauty emporium celebrated its 55th anniversary with a dress up party, on the eve of Halloween, at the main street flagship store. □

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HUMAN HINTS

Integrity2-Alignment

Yesterday we talked about sacrificing integrity in the moment for the sake of maintaining our big picture integrity. For example, keeping a job you don't like in order to maintain freedom of expression in other areas of your life.

When we're forced to sacrifice our self-integrity in the moment, we can maintain hope that our lives will change. Even if you don't know what you want, knowing that your present situation will one day change, gives you the energy and focus to get through each moment.

Change is natural and necessary. When a situation lasts longer than it should, it takes ever greater energy to hold it together. Seasons change even if we don't do anything. A situation becomes bearable with Hope that it will end some day.

When we know what we want and act toward it, we empower the process of change. Knowledge of our desires allows us to focus our energy toward them. Our present emotions, thoughts and actions define our future. When these are aligned to the same purpose, they magnify their power. Like Humanity, the Whole is far greater than the sum of its parts. When your emotions, thoughts and actions are not aligned, they conflict and disempower each other, increasing the probability of an uncertain, conflicting future.

This brings us back to personal integrity. When your emotions, thoughts, actions and intentions are aligned, your separate parts become integrated. These separate aspects of your self integrate toward a single purpose that you define, your desired future. This is why maintaining personal integrity in every moment gives us more power over our lives.

Until Tomorrow...

Go to www.HumanHints.com to sign up to receive this column in your email each day.

~Quentin Danziger

Quentin has over 20 years experience balancing what we refer to as the Real World, with science and spirit. He has held positions of responsibility and authority, received a Bachelor of Science in Engineering Physics from Colorado School of Mines, and has studied many avenues of alternative thought. HumanHints is the culmination of his knowledge, experience and practice. These free daily emails detail concrete, real-world techniques to consciously create any future you chose, while in the throes of daily life created by outdated modes of thought. □

Chief obstacle to Iran's nuclear effort: its own bad technology

By Greg Thielmann,
Peter Crail

Washington – Long before the mysterious Stuxnet computer virus struck an apparent blow at Iran's nuclear program, Tehran's nuclear effort was being delayed by a far more mundane problem: bad technology. The technical hurdles that Iran continues to face with its nuclear program help explain why US officials say Iran is still 3 to 5 years away from acquiring the bomb. This provides time and leverage for diplomatic approaches to be pursued.

Bad centrifuge designThe most fundamental problem with Iran's enrichment program appears to be its own centrifuge design. Called the P-1 after a Pakistani mock-up of a Dutch design pilfered in the 1970s, the centrifuge that Iran has been attempting to operate is known to be temperamental and fault-prone. Centrifuge technology is already a very difficult process to master, since it requires constructing complex machinery at precise specifications to allow the cylindrical devices to spin at supersonic speeds, day in and day out. Reverse engineering faulty, smuggled equipment, as Iran has tried to do, only makes this challenge worse.

IN PICTURES: Iran's military might In fact, during an Arms Control Association briefing last month, former inspections chief Olli Heinonen said Iran's P-1 centrifuge "seems to be a cul-de-sac," stating that many of the delays Iran has experienced most likely "has to do with the design itself." Iran's own efforts to try to develop a better replacement seem to bear this out, and those efforts have been stalled in the R&D phase for years. "They are still struggling with the final design and have limitations in getting raw materials," Mr. Heinonen said about that replacement effort.

Running at half capacitySo in spite of making the development of gas centrifuge enrichment technology a national priority, Iran is currently only able to run about half of the 8,500 centrifuges that it has installed at its Natanz plant. The machines that Iran has been able to run only operate at about 60 percent of their capacity, and Tehran has repeatedly had to replace broken-down centrifuges with new ones.

Replacing centrifuges is not a trivial issue, either. Iran still needs access to high-quality materials and components produced to very specific parameters. Its smuggling network to acquire such goods is sophisticated, but increasing international support for UN sanctions has helped to cut off some of

Iran's procurement pathways.

If Stuxnet indeed crippled Iran's nuclear program as several headlines read, it was already limping.

To that point, senior US officials have said over the past year that, because of the technical problems Iran has been facing, the timeframe in which Iran could make a dash toward nuclear weapons has been pushed further into the future. This only repeats a familiar pattern in which the "deadlines" cited by more alarmist assessments have come and gone:

Warnings of imminent nuclear threat – from 15 years ago In 2000, the CIA reportedly told President Clinton that Iran might already be capable of making a nuclear weapon.

In 1995, the United States assessed that Iran could have the bomb by 2003.

That same year, a book by then-Likud Party Chairman Benjamin Netanyahu said the "best estimates" placed an Iranian nuclear weapons capability at 3 to 5 years away.

Fifteen years later, Vice Joint Chiefs of Staff Chair Gen. James Cartwright gave Congress the same 3-to-5 year timeframe this April.

Make no mistake, Iran's nuclear activities are worrisome, and the threat that they pose should be taken seriously. But taking them seriously means realistically appraising the progress Iran's nuclear program has made and how much further it needs to go before it gives Iran a viable nuclear weapons capability. A bomb's worth of low-enriched uranium is not a viable capability.

Diplomacy takes timeThe meeting between Iran and the six major powers this week did not resolve much. But a diplomatic process of this kind takes time, and requires confidence to be built between both sides. Proposals such as the "fuel-swap" deal trading reactor fuel for enriched uranium can help build such necessary confidence, as well as buy additional time for a negotiation process.

And we should be mindful of just how much time we have, before once again taking any destabilizing actions ourselves that may only worsen the threat. □



After new setback, Obama Mideast plan in doubt

JOSEF FEDERMAN

Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — The U.S. decision to abandon its efforts to coax a settlement freeze out of Israel marks the biggest failure yet in the Obama administration's much-trumpeted Mideast peace push, casting serious doubts over whether the president can broker a deal by his September target. Israelis and Palestinians said Wednesday that a scramble was on for a magic formula out of the impasse. But neither side showed any flexibility, and the Palestinians voiced new signals about trying to establish a state without Israel's agreement.

The U.S. announced late Tuesday that after weeks of efforts, it had given up its attempts to persuade Israel

into renewing a limited freeze on Jewish settlement construction in the West Bank and east Jerusalem — an issue that has emerged as the key sticking point in Mideast peace talks.

Some 500,000 Israeli settlers now live in these areas, which were captured in the 1967 Mideast War and are claimed by the Palestinians.

With a freeze needed to draw the Palestinians back to the negotiating table, Tuesday's U.S. announcement was in effect an admission of failure. "There is no doubt that there is a crisis, a difficult crisis," Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas told a news conference in Greece.

A top aide to the Palestinian president, Yasser Abed Rabbo, went so far as to question Washington's ability



Palestinian Hamas lawmaker Mohammed Abu Teir, center, is escorted by Israeli border police officers and soldiers upon his release from the Ofer military prison, near the West Bank city of Ramallah, Wednesday, Dec. 8, 2010. The Israeli military released Abu Teir on Wednesday from an Israeli prison and escorted him into the West Bank, his lawyer said.

Associated Press

Chile prison fire kills at least 81

EVA VERGARA

Associated Press

SANTIAGO, Chile (AP) — A fire that began during a riot in a severely overcrowded prison killed at least 81 inmates Wednesday and seriously injured 14 others, officials said. Chileans nationwide could hear the screams of inmates after a prisoner using an illegal cell phone called state television for help.

"The conditions that existed inside this prison are absolutely inhumane," said Chilean President Sebastian Pinera, who visited an emergency center where inmates were being treated for severe burns and smoke inhalation.

National prison police director Luis Masferrer said the blaze broke out about 5:30 a.m. (7:30 a.m. EST; 1230 GMT) at the San Miguel prison south of the capital, and it was brought under control about three hours later.

Preliminary reports indicated the fire was set intentionally, said investigator Alejandro Pena. Interior Minister Rodrigo Hinzpeter said it started during fighting between inmates and reached its maximum intensity in just three minutes.



An area of the San Miguel prison is burned after a fire killed at least 81 prisoners in Santiago, Chile, Wednesday Dec. 8, 2010. A prison fire set off during a riot killed at least 81 inmates at the Chilean prison on Wednesday and seriously injured at least 14 others, officials said.

Associated Press

Firefighters said they were alerted to the fire by a call from a cell phone inside the prison.

A fire department communicate said the first firefighters arrived on the scene nine minutes after the initial alarm at 5:48 a.m., and found a violent fire spread over a large part of the fourth floor of Tower 5.

They cut through several locks, allowing them to save 60 inmates, it said.

Santiago region Gov. Fernando Echeverria said the official death toll was 81.

Health Minister Jaime

Manalich called it an "enormous calamity," and it appeared to be the worst disaster in the history of Chile's prisons. A fire in a northern prison killed 26 people in 2001.

Hundreds of worried and angry relatives of inmates gathered in a chaotic scene outside the gates of the prison, a collection of cement towers that rises above a middle class neighborhood. Some waited six hours before officials read out the names of survivors — which people mistook for those of the dead. Some spat or hurled rocks at Masferrer. □

to broker a deal, asking how the Americans could possibly "make Israel accept a fair solution" when they couldn't even make it limit its settlement activities. "This is the big question now," he said. The current round of negotiations collapsed in late September, just weeks after they were launched, when a previous Israeli settlement slowdown expired.

The Americans had hoped a new, 90-day freeze would allow the sides to work out a deal on their future borders. Such an arrangement could make the settlement issue irrelevant, since Israel could resume construction in territories it expects to keep while halting building in areas given to the Palestinians.

The latest setback drew statements of concern from Europe. Abbas' rival, the Hamas militant group, which controls the Gaza Strip, called on the Palestinian leader to stop the "futile" negotiations. But international Mideast envoy Tony Blair said the U.S. move was a "sensible decision in light of the impasse that we reached," adding that all sides remain determined to negotiate a peace deal.

Ron Dermer, a top aide to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, said Wednesday that the American

efforts had failed because of fears of what would happen after another freeze ends.

"The Americans probably realized that the proposal of 90 days to get a border agreement — a Palestinian expectation — could lead to a dead end and failure of the talks," he told Army Radio.

Netanyahu, who heads a coalition dominated by hard-line and religious parties sympathetic to Jewish settlers, appears unlikely to bend.

"The whole idea of the settlement freeze for negotiations was a mistake," said Israeli analyst Yossi Alpher. "It was never demanded of any previous Israeli government, including governments much more inclined to make peace with Palestinians ... This is not a government that is oriented to make peace."

U.S. officials said the administration has not abandoned its efforts to broker a peace deal and noted that Israeli and Palestinian negotiators will visit Washington in the coming days for consultations. But they have given few details on how they plan to proceed. Secretary of state Hillary Clinton may provide a glimpse in an eagerly anticipated speech in Washington on Friday. □

Blazing protests demand carnival singer lead Haiti

JONATHAN M. KATZ

Associated Press

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) — Protesters enraged by the results of Haiti's troubled presidential election set barricades and political offices ablaze, traded blows with U.N. peacekeepers and shut down the country's lone international airport Wednesday, creating the social upheaval many have feared since the Jan. 12 earthquake.

The fallout from the Nov. 28 election, riddled by fraud, is violently shutting down cities across the impoverished country with gunfire and barricades at a moment when medical aid workers need to tackle a surging cholera epidemic that has claimed more than 2,000 lives.

The protesters back a popular carnival singer who narrowly lost a spot in a runoff election to Jude Celestin, a political unknown viewed by supporters and detractors alike as a continuation of unpopular President Rene Preval's administration. The U.S. Embassy criticized the preliminary results Tuesday, saying Haitian, U.S. and other international monitors had predicted that Celestin was likely to be eliminated in the first round.



A supporter of presidential candidate Michel Martelly protest next to U.N. peacekeepers in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Wednesday Dec. 8, 2010. Supporters of eliminated candidates protested after officials announced that government protege Jude Celestin and former first lady Mirlande Manigat would advance to a runoff in presidential elections.

On Wednesday, demonstrators carried pink signs with the smiling face and bald head of their candidate, Michel "Sweet Micky" Martelly, and challenged heavily armored foreign soldiers to near-theatrical confrontations. Outside the provisional electoral council headquarters, a former gym in the suburb of Petionville, young men wearing their shirts as masks threw rocks at U.N. troops.

The soldiers — Indians and Pakistanis working as a single unit — responded with exploding canisters of tear gas that washed over a nearby earthquake-refugee camp, sending mothers running from their tarps with their crying, coughing children in tow.

Protesters set fire to the headquarters of Preval and Celestin's Unity party. Multiple fire trucks responded to the scene as flames licked the roof — an unusual scene in a country with few public services — but in late afternoon piles of charred campaign posters continued to smolder.

"We want Martelly. The whole world wants Martelly," said James Becimus, a 32-year-old protester near the U.S. Embassy.

"Today we set fires, tomorrow we bring weapons."

Other protesters said they would continue to mobilize but do so nonviolently, which Martelly urged them to do in a radio address Wednesday. He also told supporters to watch out for "infiltrators" who might try to incite violence.

"Demonstrating without violence is the right of the people," he said. "I will be with you until the bald-head victory."

Preval urged the candidates to call off the protests.

"This is not how the country is supposed to work," he said

in a live radio speech. "People are suffering because of all this damage."

Preval's administration has been condemned by many Haitians for failing to spearhead reconstruction of the country after the earthquake. More than an estimated 1 million people still live under tarps and tents and little of the promised international aid from the United States and other countries has arrived.

Preliminary election results put Celestin ahead of Martelly by just 6,845 votes for second place, while former first lady and law professor Mirlande Manigat took first place. The top two candidates advance to the Jan. 16 second round.

Thousands were disenfranchised by confusion on the rolls, which were overstuffed with earthquake dead but lacked many living voters. There were reported incidents of ballot-stuffing, violence and intimidation confirmed by international observers, but U.N. peacekeepers and the joint Organization of American States-Caribbean Community observer mission said the problems did not invalidate the vote.

Turnout was low. Just over 1 million people cast accepted ballots out of some 4.7 million registered voters. It is not known how many ballots were thrown out for fraud.

In a televised address, Preval took a swipe at Washington's criticism of the election results, saying that while he was open to discussing electoral problems with anyone, "the American Embassy is not (the electoral council)."

State Department spokesman P.J. Crowley said the U.S. is not fomenting the unrest.

"The United States is in no way responsible for the actions of any individual. What we are determined to help Haiti achieve is a credible election and a result — not one that the United States will impose — but one that the people of Haiti can participate in fully," he told reporters in Washington.

Martelly had joined with 11 other candidates, including Manigat, to accuse Preval of trying to steal the election while polls were still open.

An appeals period is open for the next three days, and election observers said a third candidate might be included in the runoff if the electoral council decides the first-round vote was close enough — though the constitutionality of such a move would be debatable.

U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon expressed concern "about allegations of fraud" and "the acts of violence that have taken place in the aftermath of the announcement," U.N. spokesman Martin Nesirky said at U.N. headquarters in New York.

He said all candidates have a responsibility to encourage their supporters to refrain from violence.

Vehicles were damaged by rocks and items were reportedly stolen from stores. Foreign aid workers complained that Haitian national police were slow to respond and that many officers refused to report to duty.

American Airlines canceled all flights in and out of the Haitian capital because airport employees were unable to get to work Wednesday because of demonstrations, spokeswoman Martha Pantin said. Flights will also be canceled on Thursday. □



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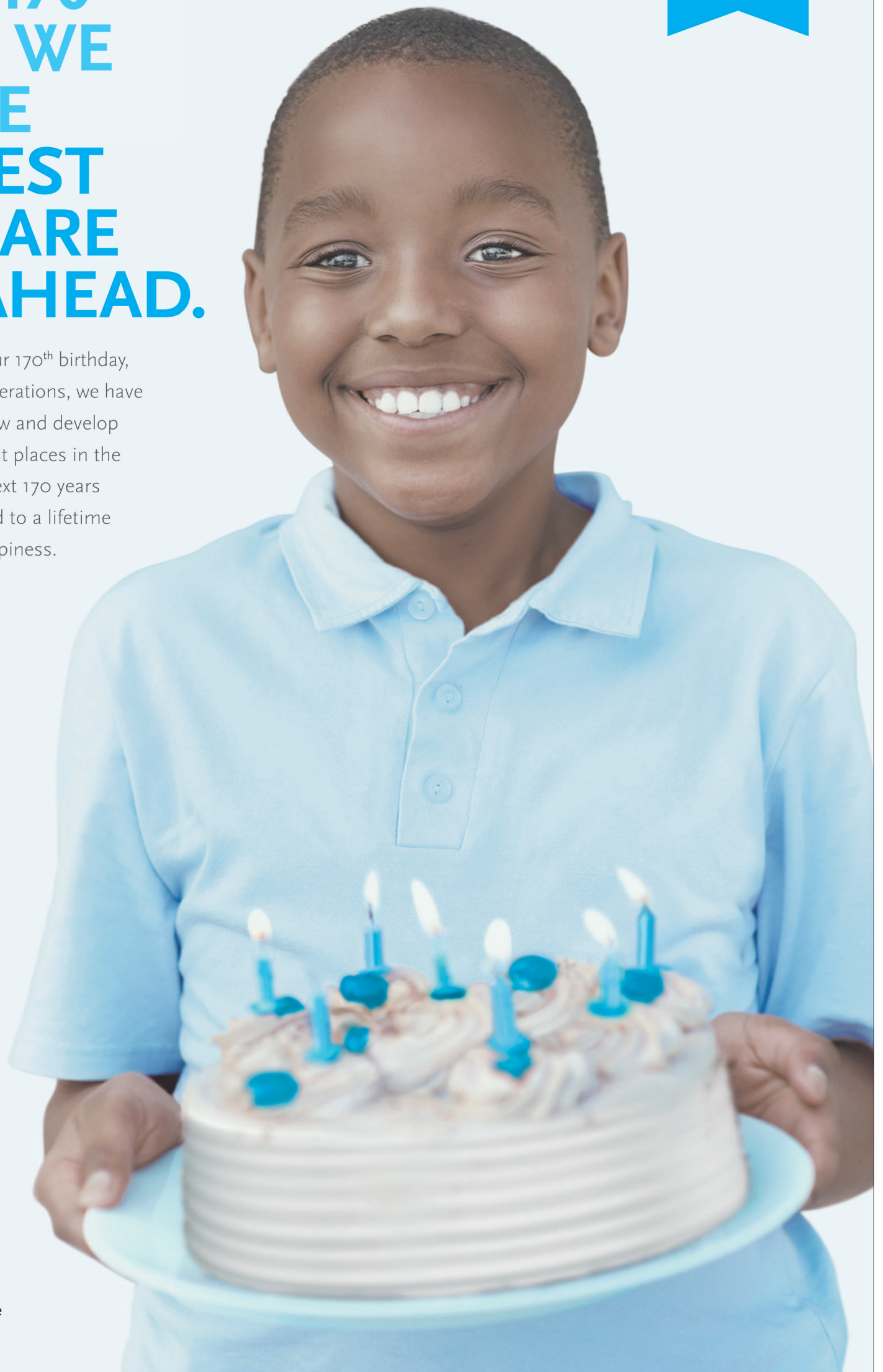
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Antarctic cruise ship limping to port in Argentina



This Dec. 7, 2010 photo shows the Antarctic tourist ship the "Clelia II" struggling in high seas with 165 people aboard in the southern Drake Passage, just north of the Shetland Islands. The ship declared an emergency on Tuesday, reporting it had suffered engine damage amid heavy seas and 55 mph winds when it was about 500 miles from Ushuaia, the Argentine Navy said in a statement.

Associated Press

BUENOS AIRES (AP) — A large wave slammed into an Antarctic cruise ship with 88 American passengers and 77 crew members aboard, but the ship's crew overcame minor damage and was heading safely back to its scheduled port on Wednesday, the vessel's operator said. The Clelia II declared an emergency on Tuesday, reporting it had suffered engine damage amid heavy

seas and 55 mph winds when it was northeast of the South Shetland Islands and about 500 miles from Ushuaia, the Argentine Navy said in a statement.

The International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators issued statement saying the wave that hit the Clelia II caused a broken bridge window and some electrical malfunctions that temporarily knocked out some communications and affected engine performance.

"There are no injuries to passengers, although one member of the crew sustained minor injuries," it said.

Another ship, the National Geographic Explorer, accompanied the Clelia II for much of the day and helped in restoring its communications, according

to the association statement. The ship had 88 passengers, all from the United States, and 77 crew: 44 from the Philippines and the rest from Greece, Bulgaria, Argentina, Austria, Brazil, Chile, Croatia, France, Denmark, Hungary, Indonesia, Ukraine, Romania, Britain and the United States.

It was heading for the port of Ushuaia at the extreme south of Argentina at normal speed by midday Wednesday and was in no danger, the association said. The ship set out from Ushuaia on Nov. 30 and was scheduled to return on Wednesday.

The ship is operated by Travel Dynamics International of New York and owned by Helios Shipping of Piraeus, Greece. □

Catch your own dinner with Driftwood! Motto at Driftwood Restaurant: "From the pier to your plate!"

ORANJESTAD - The downtown marina is home of Driftwood Fishing Charters, the successful fishermen of the established seafood restaurant Driftwood in Oranjestad.

Driftwood owner Herby Merryweather has a love and passion for fishing. A fisherman who knows about fish, what our local waters have to offer, and what the words



"fresh seafood" really mean. What Herby catches will be served in his restaurant on

the same day. Herby loves to share his fishing passion with the many visitors to the island. His fleet of a 35 ft. Twin Engine Bertram yacht and a 50 ft. Twin Engine Post yacht, appropriately called "Driftwood I and II, is available for charters on a daily basis from 8am to

Catch your own dinner

12 noon and from 1pm to 5pm. A charter includes: captain, mate, all fishing equipment, bait, sodas and bottled water. On a full day charter sandwiches and snacks are also included. You can call Herby directly at (297) 592 4040 or go to www.driftwoodaruba.com.

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Florida football coach Meyer resigns



Florida head football coach Urban Meyer announces his resignation during a news conference in Gainesville, Fla., Wednesday, Dec. 8, 2010.

Associated Press

By MARK LONG

AP Sports Writer

GAINESVILLE, Fla. —

With his wife and two of his three children sitting a few feet away, Urban Meyer didn't have to look very far to be reminded why he's leaving one of the premier jobs in college football. It's all about family.

Meyer resigned from Florida on Wednesday, stepping down for the second time in less than a year. His first attempt, which lasted just a day, was for health reasons. This time it's to be a better husband and father.

"At the end of the day, I'm very convinced that you're going to be judged on how you are as a husband and as a father and not on how many bowl games we won," Meyer said at a campus news conference.

Continued on Next Page



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Boston Bruins left wing Milan Lucic, right, is upended by Buffalo Sabres center Jochen Hecht, left, of Germany, during the second period of an NHL hockey game in Boston, Tuesday, Dec. 7, 2010.

Associated Press

Page B4



Florida coach Urban Meyer looks up at the scoreboard as time runs out in the fourth quarter of an NCAA college football game against Florida State on Saturday, Nov. 27, 2010 in Tallahassee, Fla. Florida State won 31-7.

MEYER

Continued on Page B1

"I've not seen my two girls play high school sports. They're both very talented Division I-A volleyball players, so I missed those four years. I missed two already with one away at college. I can't get that time back."

The 46-year-old coach led Florida to two national titles but briefly resigned last December, citing health concerns. He had been hospitalized with chest pains after the Gators lost to Alabama in last season's Southeastern Conference championship game.

"Last year was a knee-jerk reaction," Meyer said. "This year was just completely different."

Meyer called Florida athletic director Jeremy Foley on Saturday to tell him he was contemplating retirement. They met Tuesday to finalize his intentions.

Meyer signed a six-year, \$24 million extension in 2009, meaning he's walking away from about \$20 million in guaranteed salary. But Foley did agree to pay Meyer a \$1 million retention bonus the coach would have received had he been employed on Jan. 31, 2011.

This time, Foley doesn't anticipate another change of heart.

"He's worked his tail off," Foley said. "You think of what he's rebuilt. He built one at Bowling Green, he built one at Utah, he built one here.

Associated Press

It's not just sacrifices here the last six years. That's 10 years of their lives, not to mention what he did before that as an assistant coach. It's his time to step back and spend time with his family. You're not getting it back. I admire him for that." Foley said the coaching search will begin immediately and hopes to have a new coach before Christmas. Although Foley declined to offer names, Utah's Kyle Whittingham, Mississippi State's Dan Mullen and Arkansas' Bobby Petrino are likely on the list. Meyer said he planned to be involved in the search, which could make Whittingham and Mullen front-runners. Whittingham was Meyer's defensive coordinator in Utah, and Mullen held the same position under Meyer for four years at Florida. Petrino was Foley's second choice behind Meyer in 2004.

"I don't see why it should take that long," Foley said, adding that he has not contacted anyone.

Meyer's announcement caught players, fans and the rest of college football by surprise.

He called assistant coaches, many of whom were on the road recruiting, earlier this week to relay the news. Quarterbacks coach Scot Loeffler told the AP he was "stunned" and that no one saw this coming.

"We'll be fine," said Loeffler, adding that Meyer was planning to meet with his staff Wednesday night. "It happens

in this profession. We're just happy for him. He's doing it the right way."

AOL FanHouse first reported the resignation, and fellow coaches were quick to praise his efforts at Florida.

"The world of college football will miss Urban," said former USC coach Pete Carroll, who left his job for the NFL's Seattle Seahawks. "He did a great job coaching at Florida. He had major personal issues and health issues a year ago, and I'm sure that he did everything he could to fight it off. Now he's making decisions that are probably exactly what he needs to be doing."

Added former Florida coach and current South Carolina coach Steve Spurrier: "I believe he will coach again some day, but if he doesn't, he will go down as one of the best coaches in college football history."

Meyer left open the possibility of returning to the sideline, but said it was not going to happen in the "immediacy."

He plans to catch his daughters' volleyball matches — his oldest is a sophomore at Georgia Tech and the other will attend Florida Gulf Coast next fall — and catch more of

his son's athletic events.

"There's not a perfect time, however, this is probably about as good a time you can have," Meyer said.

The decision to walk away was even tougher because of Florida's struggles this season. The Gators were near the bottom the SEC in every offensive category, got blown out in games against Alabama, South Carolina and Florida State, and finished 7-5. It was the most losses in Meyer's 10-year coaching career.

"I just think Florida deserves the best, and I'm not sure we gave them my best this year," he said.

Meyer was hired away from Utah by Florida after he led the Utes to an undefeated season. In his second season in Gainesville, he led the Gators' to a national championship. Two seasons later he won another, the third time overall the school topped the final AP Top 25.

A bid for another national championship fell short in 2009, and the day after Christmas, Meyer surprisingly announced that he was giving up the job. Less than 24 hours later, he changed his mind and

decided to instead take a leave of absence.

Meyer scaled back in January — he didn't go on the road recruiting — but still worked steadily through national signing day. He returned for spring practice in March, but managed to take significant time off before and after.

But this season he had to replace Tim Tebow and several other stars who had gone on to the NFL, and the Gators struggled mightily.

Florida lost five regular-season for the first time since 1988. The season ended with an embarrassing 31-7 victory to Florida State, Meyer's first loss to the rival Seminoles.

After that game, Meyer vowed to fix the Gators' problems. Now, he'll help find the person to do it.

"It has to be fixed," he said. "It's broke a little bit right now. But the way you fix it is hard work. When I say broke it's broke because of a constant attrition of coaches who, God bless them, have gone on to be great head coaches. ... You lose five juniors to the NFL draft and you have a little bit of a void in there right now. But it's Florida. We'll be back strong, stronger than ever." □

Klitschko out of title fight due to back injury



Ukrainian heavy weight world champion Wladimir Klitschko, left, and his British challenger Dereck Chisora face each other after a press conference in Mannheim, Germany, Monday, Dec. 6, 2010. Klitschko will box Chisora in a WBO, IBF and IBO world championship fight on Saturday in Mannheim.

Associated Press

MANNHEIM, Germany (AP) — Wladimir Klitschko withdrew from his WBO and IBF heavyweight title defense against unbeaten British challenger Dereck Chisora because of a torn muscle in his back.

Klitschko's 19th title defense had been scheduled for

Saturday in Mannheim, but he pulled out Wednesday with an injury described by his boxing adviser in the United States as not being particularly serious. "Wladimir has withdrawn from the fight, that is correct. He has torn a muscle in his back," Shelley Finkel said. "It is not too serious though. He

should be able to fight again within 60 days."

Frank Warren, who was promoting Chisora for the bout, told boxingscene.com that his client was shocked after hearing the news.

"Dereck is very disappointed," Warren said. "He didn't believe it. He felt everything was fine. Three or four days before a title fight, most of the hard work is done."

Talks are now expected between the fighters' representatives over rescheduling the fight.

In the buildup to the fight, the relatively inexperienced Chisora (14-0) had thanked Klitschko for the opportunity but also insulted the quality of the Ukrainian's previous opponents, his trainer and girlfriend.

Klitschko has a 55-3 record with 49 knockouts. WBA heavyweight champion David Haye wants to fight him and his brother Vitali, the WBC titleholder, in a bid to unify the heavyweight division. □

NBA Roundup

2 French backups help lift Mavs past Warriors

DALLAS (AP) — Third-string center Ian Mahinmi had 12 points and a career-high 10 rebounds, and fourth-stringer Alexis Ajinca provided quality minutes to help the Dallas Mavericks beat the Golden State Warriors 105-100 Tuesday for their 10th straight victory.

Dirk Nowitzki scored 25 points, Jason Terry had 20 and Caron Butler 19 — but that's expected. The surprise was the performance by the backup big men, both from France. They were forced into duty because starter Tyson Chandler was home with a stomach ailment and fill-in starter Brendan Haywood got in early foul trouble.

Stephen Curry scored 21 points, David Lee had 20, Monta Ellis 18 and Dorrell Wright 17 for Golden State.

Bobcats 100, Nuggets 98

At Charlotte, North Carolina, Stephen Jackson scored 23 points as Charlotte held off Denver to deny Nuggets coach George Karl his 1,000th NBA win.

Returning to North Carolina where he played in college and going up against his longtime friend and fellow former Tar Heel Larry Brown, Karl had hoped to become the seventh coach of the 1,000-win club in Charlotte.

Chauncey Billups scored 25 points and Carmelo Anthony added 22 points and seven rebounds for the Nuggets, who had won seven straight.

Gerald Wallace had 20 points and nine boards for Charlotte. Tyrus Thomas scored 16 before leaving left late in the fourth quarter with a tight left quadriceps.

Lakers 115, Wizards 108

At Los Angeles, Kobe Bryant scored 32 points, and Lamar Odom added 24 points and seven rebounds as the Lakers beat Washington for the eighth straight time.

Pau Gasol had 21 points, 14 rebounds and eight assists for the Lakers in their final home game before a seven-game, two-week trip that includes a rematch with Washington on Dec.

14. Los Angeles struggled to put away the lively Wizards, but never trailed for the fourth time this season.

Nick Young hit a career-best six 3-pointers while scoring 30 points in his hometown for the Wizards, who closed the third quarter on a 16-1 run to make the two-time defending champions uncomfortable. John Wall backed Young with 22 points and 14 assists.

Trail Blazers 106, Suns 99

At Portland, Oregon, Wesley Matthews scored 24 points, Brandon Roy and LaMarcus Aldridge had 20 apiece and Portland snapped the Suns' three-game winning streak.

Phoenix led by as many as nine points early in the fourth quarter but the Trail Blazers, known for late-game meltdowns of late, tied it at 89 on Nicolas Batum's layup and went in front on Aldridge's two free throws with 3:38 left. Matthews made two more foul shots to extend Portland's lead.

Steve Nash had 24 points and 15 assists for Phoenix.

The Blazers made 32 of 33 free-throw attempts while playing without guard Andre Miller, who was serving a one-game suspension imposed by the league for making "excessive and unnecessary contact" with Blake Griffin in the fourth quarter of a 100-91 victory over the Clippers on Sunday. At Atlanta, Josh Smith scored a season-high 34 points to lead streaking Atlanta to another victory.

The Hawks are 4-1 since losing top scorer Joe Johnson for four to six weeks to a right elbow injury and have won seven of eight overall.

Jamal Crawford had a season-high 26 points and Al Horford added 24 points, 10 rebounds and six assists for Atlanta.

In other NBA games it was Atlanta 116, New Jersey 101; Charlotte 100, Denver 98; Philadelphia 117, Cleveland 97; Dallas 105, Golden State 100; Houston 97, Detroit 83; Portland 106, Phoenix 99; and L.A. Lakers 115, Washington 108. □



Golden State Warriors center Andris Biedrins, left, and forward David Lee, right, defend Dallas Mavericks center Ian Mahinmi (28) during the second half of an NBA basketball game against the Golden State Warriors in Dallas on Tuesday, Dec. 7, 2010. The Mavericks won 105-100.

Associated Press





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NHL Roundup

Recchi tips Seidenberg's OT slapper, and it counts

BOSTON (AP) — Mark Recchi tipped Dennis Seidenberg's slap shot past Ryan Miller in overtime, a power-play goal that was initially waved off by the referee, as the Boston Bruins escaped with a 3-2 victory over the Buffalo Sabres on Tuesday.

The game continued until the next whistle, with 1:58 left, but the goal 2:11 into the period officially ended it.

Tim Thomas stopped 28 shots to help Boston bounce back from a shootout loss to Toronto on Saturday.

Miller made 33 saves.

Milan Lucic and Nathan Horton also scored for the Bruins. Luke Adam netted his first NHL goal for Buffalo, but he also raked his stick across Marc Savard's face to give Boston an overtime power play.

At Sunrise, Florida, Stephen Weiss scored his second goal of the game 43 seconds into overtime to give Florida a victory over Colorado.

Bill Thomas and David Booth also had goals for Florida, which has won two straight following a three-game losing streak. Tomas Vokoun made 22 saves.

John-Michael Liles, Ryan O'Reilly and Matt Duchene scored for the Avalanche, who have lost four in a row.

At Montreal, Jeff Halpern, Brian Gionta and Roman Hamrlik scored third-period

goals and Carey Price made 27 saves as Montreal beat Ottawa for its third straight win.

Michael Cammalleri added a power-play goal in the first for Montreal.

Ottawa's Nick Foligno scored a power-play goal late in the first period, but the Senators fell to 3-7-1 in their last 11.

At Edmonton, Alberta, Cam Fowler's goal in the 10th round of a shootout lifted Anaheim over Edmonton after the Ducks blew a two-goal lead in the third period.

Joffrey Lupul had a goal to give the Ducks the lead in the shootout's first round. Taylor



Boston Bruins right wing Mark Recchi, left, tips the puck past Buffalo Sabres goalie Ryan Miller, right, to score the game-winning goal during overtime of an NHL hockey game in Boston, Tuesday, Dec. 7, 2010. The Bruins beat the Sabres 3-2.

Associated Press

Hall, the top pick in this year's draft, answered in the third round for Edmonton.

Jonas Hiller made 34 saves through overtime. Khabibulin stopped 30.

Saku Koivu and Teemu Selanne scored in regulation for the Ducks, who had been shut out in their two previous games and had lost eight of 11.

Ryan Jones and Dustin Penner helped rally the Oilers, whose four-game winning streak ended.

At Calgary, Alberta, Rene Bourque had a goal and two assists in Calgary's win over Tampa Bay.

Cory Sarich, Tom Kostopoulos and Jarome Iginla also scored for the Flames.

Johan Harju and Ryan Malone had goals for the Lightning, who beat Colorado 6-5 at home on Saturday.

In other NHL games it was Anaheim 3, Edmonton 2, SO; Montreal 4, Ottawa 1; Boston 3, Buffalo 2, OT; Florida 4, Colorado 3, OT; and Calgary 4, Tampa Bay 2. □



Pavelec emerges from scary fall to star

GEORGE HENRY

Associated Press

DULUTH, Georgia (AP) — Ondrej Pavelec can't explain how he has emerged from a fainting spell in Atlanta's opener to become one of the NHL's top goalies.

Atlanta Thrashers goalie Ondrej Pavelec, of the Czech Republic, makes a save during the third period of an NHL hockey game against the Washington Capitals Saturday, Dec. 4, 2010, in Washington. The Thrashers won 3-1.

Associated Press

Whatever the reason, the Czech player just wants to help the Thrashers keep winning.

The Thrashers have won two straight and eight of nine, thanks in part to Pavelec, the 23-year-old goalie who fainted early in the Oct. 8 opener, sustained a concussion and was sidelined for three weeks. Pavelec (9-5-2) won't say if he envisioned having the NHL's second-best save percentage and goals-against average while he underwent weeks of physical testing and trips to a neurologist.

Instead, he prefers to talk about a young Atlanta club that has the league's best power-play percentage and a defense that ranks second in takeaways and third in blocked shots. □

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Judge delays Clemens trial by 3 months

NEDRA PICKLER

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) —

A judge on Wednesday postponed the trial of baseball star Roger Clemens for three months until July so his attorneys can review the voluminous evidence generated during a 2½-year investigation into whether he lied about using performance enhancing drugs.

At a hearing in Washington federal court, prosecutors said the case has produced some 54,000 pages of evidence. They are required to turn over to the defense any material that might tend to clear the former major league pitcher. Clemens' attorney Rusty Hardin said they need more time to go through the material they receive and to hire an expert witness to examine the scientific evidence against Clemens, presumably including the syringes Clemens' former trainer says he used to inject the pitcher with the drugs.

Hardin also said baseball investigator George Mitchell and a congressional panel that examined the use of performance enhancing drugs are refusing to turn over material for the criminal case. He said the Mitchell team was claiming attorney-client and attorney work-product privileges and the committee was arguing that turning the material over would violate the

separation of powers between the legislative and judicial branches. Hardin indicated he will seek a subpoena for the contested material, particularly any interviews with Clemens' accusers.

U.S. District Judge Reggie Walton set a March 14 hearing on the matter and said he expected the Mitchell team and the committee would try to fight a subpoena. He said that battle could end up in appeals court, but he hoped it wouldn't delay the trial further. Clemens, wearing a dark pinstripe suit, dark shirt and silver paisley tie, did not comment, but sat taking notes during the half-hour hearing. As he left the courthouse escorted by federal marshals, he smiled broadly and said he felt "wonderful."

Clemens pleaded not guilty on Aug. 30 and has long fought any suggestion that he cheated during a 23-season career that ended with 354 wins, 4,672 strikeouts and seven Cy Young awards.

If convicted of six counts — three of making false statements, two of perjury and one of obstruction of Congress — Clemens could face up to 30 years in prison and a \$1.5 million fine, although 15 to 21 months is the more likely sentence under federal guidelines.

The charges stem from testimony he gave to Congress in 2008. He went before a

House committee to clear his name after becoming a prominent figure in the Mitchell Report, which came out a year earlier with an unflinching account of baseball's drug crisis.

Back then, Clemens testified: "Let me be clear. I have never taken steroids or HGH," human growth hormone.

Clemens' former trainer Brian McNamee said the pitcher did use steroids and HGH. Former teammate Andy Pettitte also told congressional investigators that Clemens told him he had used HGH — a conversation Clemens said Pettitte "misremembers."

Clemens was originally scheduled to go on trial in April. Hardin requested the



The Former Major League Baseball pitcher Roger Clemens, center, accompanied by his lawyers, Michael Attanasio, left, and Rusty Hardin, arrives at court in Washington, Wednesday, Dec. 8, 2010, for an interim status conference on charges he lied to Congress when he denied taking steroids or other performance enhancing drugs.

Associated Press

trial be moved to September, saying they need to review statements from somewhere

between 80 and 90 law enforcement officials who have written about the case. □

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R

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PG-13

Johnny Knoxville Bam Margera

jackass 3D

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R

Daniel Radcliffe Emma Watson

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PG-13

Robert Downey Jr. Zach Galifianakis

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R

Crippen complained about U.S. support before death



In this July 14, 2007, file photo, Fran Crippen of the United States, holds up his goald medal he won in the men's 10-kilometer swimming marathon at the Pan American Games at Copacabana beach in Rio de Janeiro. Nine days before he died in an open-water race, Crippen sent an e-mail to the head of USA Swimming, complaining about a lack of financial support and the failure to send coaches to "protect the athletes" at meets around the world.

Associated Press

PAUL NEWBERRY

AP National Writer

Nine days before he died in an open-water race, American Fran Crippen sent an e-mail to the head of USA Swimming, complaining about a lack of financial support and the failure to send coaches to "protect the athletes" at meets around the world.

While two separate investigations into Crippen's Oct. 23 death will undoubtedly focus on allegations that world governing body FINA failed to ensure safe conditions for the race in the United Arab Emirates, the actions of USA Swimming are also under scrutiny.

Crippen's e-mail to USA Swimming executive director Chuck Wielgus refers to a plan being pushed by former national team coach Mark Schubert that called for increased compensation and making sure someone was on hand to support and watch out for the athletes at major events. Reached Tuesday by The Associated Press, Schubert confirmed that he decided in early September to appoint national youth coach Jack

Roach, a former Marine and beach lifeguard, as the head open-water coach.

Schubert said he wanted Roach to attend any open-water meet with at least four American competitors the rest of the year, then make sure a coach or representative was at all the biggest meets beginning in 2011. Under that plan, Roach would have been at the race near Dubai in which Crippen lost his life.

"In open water, we always worry about safety," Schubert told the AP. "It's not like a swimming pool when somebody goes to the bottom. You see 'em and you dive in. If you go to the bottom in that sport, nobody sees it and, just like Fran, they find your body two hours later. It's sickening." Schubert said he never got a chance to put his plan into effect. He was placed on leave in mid-September and formally fired last month.

The only person assisting the U.S. team in the Middle East was the father of a swimmer who paid his own way, leading some to wonder if the national governing body did enough to protect its athletes.

Crippen's coach, Dick Shoulberg, told the AP he's convinced the 26-year-old swimmer would not have been allowed to race in potentially dangerous conditions if Roach had been there.

"If Mark Schubert had a representative at the meet, they would have said, 'We're not swimming,'" said Shoulberg, who has been outspoken about beefing up safety for an emerging sport that became part of the Olympics in 2008. "I think Fran would be alive if U.S. swimming would've had more support for its athletes." Shoulberg stressed that most of his fury is directed at FINA, claiming the meet was moved on short notice to a course without adequate rescue personnel, and that it shouldn't have been held anyway because water temperatures were too warm. Crippen failed to finish the 10-kilometer race and his body was found about two hours later.

FINA and USA Swimming are conducting separate investigations but have yet to issue their findings. □

Manning, Colts try to snap skid vs woeful Titans

By TERESA M. WALKER

AP Sports Writer

NASHVILLE, Tenn. —

Trying to snap out of the funk he's been in for three games, Peyton Manning is heading to a town to play a team that could help him do just that.

Tennessee is struggling even more than the four-time MVP, going 10 quarters without an interception and 13 without scoring an offensive touchdown. The Titans (5-7) have lost five straight, and now here comes Manning, who routinely puts up some of his best performances against them.

The banged-up Colts (6-6) have lost three straight themselves, and Manning says there's a sense of urgency for both teams going into Thursday night's game. The AFC South has only been won by these two teams, yet Jacksonville leads Indianapolis by a game and Tennessee by two.

"I think it's about how you respond to it," Manning said. "I know both teams are coming off of disappointing losses. I think that sometimes a short week might be the best medicine for that. I know both teams are looking forward to playing."

Manning isn't happy with his career-worst 11 interceptions over the past three games, four returned for touchdowns. But he's still a top passer, and his next TD pass will make him the first in NFL history to throw 25 touchdown passes in 13 straight seasons.

The Titans struggled to slow Manning's brother Eli, Kyle Orton of Denver and Tony Romo in Dallas, and that was when they were winning. Now they're struggling to even run the ball, with Chris Johnson having only 20 carries for 58 yards over the past

two games, including last week's 17-6 loss to Jacksonville.

They expect Manning at his sharpest despite the four interceptions in each of the past two losses, including Indianapolis' 38-35 overtime defeat to Dallas on Sunday.

"The concern is that eventually that stops," Titans coach Jeff Fisher said. "That's the concern. With tipped balls and things like that he's got somebody in his face, he doesn't see the underneath drop defender and the guy picks the ball off. Those are things that happen to all quarterbacks."

Still, the Titans agree it's very strange to see so many of Manning's passes wind up in defenders' hands. The Colts have won three straight against Tennessee, and Manning is 11-5 against the Titans with just 13 interceptions in those games.

"He may be pressing, trying," Titans cornerback Cortland Finnegan said. "He loves throwing touchdowns. He's got a lot of guys in his face, too. That's why he has some errant throws."

Manning will be getting someone he knows well in a backfield missing Joseph Addai after the Colts signed Dominic Rhodes. That should help considering the defense lost starting cornerback Jerraud Powers to injured reserve Tuesday. Finnegan is the guy who aggravated Texans receiver Andre Johnson so much while defending him throughout their game that Johnson punched him three times in the head in the fourth quarter. The Titans are likely to put Finnegan on Colts receiver Reggie Wayne throughout this game, especially because Wayne had 14 catches for 200 yards last week.



FILE - This Dec. 5, 2010, file photo shows Indianapolis Colts quarterback Peyton Manning during an NFL football game against the Dallas Cowboys, in Indianapolis. The Colts have lost three straight games, seen their four-time MVP quarterback become mistake-prone and are in danger of missing the playoffs for the first time since 2001.

"It's going to be a chance for me to make some plays, and it's going to be a good thing," Finnegan said.

Manning will have plenty of chances to target Titans rookie cornerback Alterraun Verner, who thinks he was 10 the year Manning entered the NFL. "I'm definitely not scared," said Verner, who has two interceptions. "That just means more opportunity for me. I'm 100 percent sure he's going to come after me."

The Titans are almost happy to see Manning after giving up 258 yards rushing to Jacksonville. Staying on the field offensively and scoring are the Titans' top priorities. They rank last in the NFL in time of possession, and this will be the first time since mid-October the same quarterback has started consecutive games for Tennessee, with Kerry Collins behind center.

Tight end Bo Scaife, who heard the ball thudding off his chest for two days after dropping a touchdown pass against the Jaguars, said the best fix to energize the Titans will be letting

Johnson run wild against a defense giving up 142.8 yards rushing per game.

"He's our engine. When we get him going, it seems like everyone can breathe a little easier," Scaife said.

Indianapolis and Tennessee still could win the division by winning out. "That is a good thing when you are looking at the silver lining," Colts coach Jim Caldwell said. "That is a good thing at this point in time, but we have to do something about it." The Titans have been booed heavily by their home fans in each of their

last two games, both losses. Empty seats are expected in a sold-out stadium. The Titans insist they want to give the fans something to cheer and improve on a home record that's just 2-4. "It's kind of awkward to be 5-7 but still have an opportunity if things play out right, to still have an opportunity to go to the playoffs," Titans safety Michael Griffin said. "Right now I think our backs are against the wall, and this is a must win this week. If not, the season is pretty much over." □

FEAR
of HIV is no reason to reject and discriminate

If you have a fear of contracting HIV, the best protection is condom use or abstinence.

Hurting someone's feelings will not protect you!



FIFA President Joseph Blatter announces Russia to host the 2018 World Cup during the announcement of the host country for the 2018 soccer World Cup in Zurich, Switzerland, Thursday, Dec. 2, 2010.

Associated Press

ZURICH (AP) — FIFA is not corrupt, Sepp Blatter insisted Wednesday, though it needs a better image after the World Cup hosting contests. The FIFA president fiercely defended his organization in a Swiss magazine interview, and denounced England for reacting like an arrogant bad loser ever since Russia and Qatar were chosen to stage the 2018 and 2022 tournaments. “I’ll say it clearly: there is no systematic corruption at FIFA. That’s nonsense,” Blatter told the *Weltwoche* weekly. “We are financially clean and

transparent.” FIFA’s ethics court suspended two of Blatter’s executive committee colleagues from taking part in last Thursday’s votes after a British newspaper alleged bribe-taking and vote-rigging. Blatter then reminded FIFA voters immediately before polling of media “evils” during the World Cup campaign. Within 24 hours of FIFA inflicting a humiliating rejection, officials from England’s 2018 bid also accused several voters of breaking promises of support

Blatter: FIFA not corrupt, England bad loser

they gave to a lobbying team that included Prince William and Prime Minister David Cameron.

Blatter said he was surprised by the reaction in England, which he called “the motherland of fair play.”

“Now some of them are proving to be bad losers themselves,” he said. “I sense in some reactions a little bit of arrogance of the western, Christian kind.”

Leaders of Australia’s defeated 2022 bid also cited broken promises after they followed England in another first-round elimination.

However, Blatter defended FIFA for choosing the riskiest, most expensive bids, which saw the World Cup hosting rights awarded to Eastern Europe and the Middle East for the first time.

“It’s my philosophy to drive forward the expansion of football.

The next regions that we need to conquer would be China

and India,” Blatter said.

“Football has become a political matter. Heads of state court me. Football has become a monster, but it’s a positive monster.”

Blatter dismissed suggestions that FIFA officials are tempted to cash in on football’s global importance.

“Nobody can come along and simply hold out their hand,” he said. “There are no rotten eggs.”

Three days before the vote, Britain’s state broadcaster, the BBC, and newspapers in Switzerland and Germany alleged that three long-standing members of FIFA’s ruling committee took kickbacks from its former marketing partner in the 1990s.

Blatter singled out the case of Issa Hayatou, the president of African football’s governing body.

“He was portrayed as criminal by the media, because his federation supposedly took

\$25,000. I can tell you: Hayatou is the son of a sultan and hasn’t done anything wrong,” he said.

Blatter dismissed the payments — allegedly also received by Brazilian football leader Ricardo Teixeira and Nicolas Leoz, the South American confederation president — as insignificant.

“Fifteen years ago, there were apparently payments to foreign FIFA officials that weren’t even illegal at the time and were even tax deductible,” he said, adding that since 2006 the ethics panel monitored officials’ behavior.

While defending FIFA’s system of choosing World Cup hosts, Blatter said the organization he has led for 12 years would now “look inward” before making changes.

“We can’t go on like this. We need to improve our image,” he said. “We also need to set some things straight inside FIFA.” □

England’s Parker leads Dubai Ladies Masters

MICHAEL CASEY,
AP Sports Writer

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — England’s Florentyna Parker shot a 5-under 67 to take a one-shot lead in the opening round of the Dubai Ladies Masters, while a late triple bogey dropped Michelle Wie down the leaderboard on Wednesday.

Maria Verchenova of Russia was second at 68, a shot better than a five-woman group including Marianne Skarpnord of Norway, Julieta Granada of Paraguay, Morgana Robbertze of South Africa as well as In-kyung Kim and Bo-mi Suh of South Korea.

Wie posted a 1-under 71 in the season-ending Ladies European Tour event.

The 130th-ranked Parker, who was 11th on the European Tour money list, birdied three of her first four holes and five of the first nine to lead halfway through the opening round. She had a much quieter back nine with one birdie and a bogey.

“I had a great start and was hitting close to the pin and made the putts,” Parker said. “I felt really

comfortable. You have a few birdies and think you can birdie every hole. ... It just gives you confidence.”

Parker, who grew up in Germany and was coached by her father Tim, earned her first victory this year in the Netherlands, and has six top-10 finishes in just her second year on the tour.

“I felt comfortable in my first year but when you win it gives you more confidence, and every time you tee it up you know you can do it,” she said. “I was feeling really good about this week. I got off to a great start. That is what I struggled with last year. I always struggled in the first round and was always a few shots behind.”

Verchenova, who needs a top-20 finish to retain her European Tour card, said the round was reflective of her improving game since coming back from wrist and lower back injuries which plagued her season. After receiving an invitation from tournament organizers to play, Verchenova said she was satisfied with her outing.

“I didn’t have a good season but you

know I am coming back thinking positive,” she said. “It is one of those weeks where I need a top-20 (finish) or I’ll go back to qualifying school. But I’m not thinking about that. I’m just playing.”

The 10th-ranked Wie, who has been battling a bad back for weeks, was in second for much of the day after making two birdies on her first nine holes and then an eagle after the turn. Wie was at 3 under before taking triple bogey on the eighth hole, where she hit her drive out of bounds and her next shot into a bunker.

“I was pretty mad. I was like, I can’t believe that just happened,” Wie said. “But things happen on the golf course and all you can do is get mad for a little bit and move forward.” She managed to birdie her final hole.

“I’m just happy to be done,” Wie said. “I thought that I played pretty good, hopefully make a couple more putts out there tomorrow and not have a 7 on the card.”

In the race for the European money title, neither South African Lee-



England’s Florentyna Parker approach the third green, during the first round of the Omega Dubai Ladies Masters golf tournament, held at the Emirates Golf Club, Dubai, Wednesday Dec 8, 2010.

Associated Press

Anne Pace nor her only challenger, seven-time winner Laura Davies, stood out. Pace, who tops the money list, shot a 1-over 73. She can become the first South African to win the Order of Merit, if she fends off a challenge from Davies, who needs a top-two finish. □

Hackers strike back to support WikiLeaks founder

By RAPHAEL G. SATTER

JILL LAWLESS,

Associated Press

LONDON — WikiLeaks supporters struck back Wednesday at perceived enemies of the site and its jailed founder Julian Assange, launching hacker attacks against MasterCard, Swedish prosecutors, a Swedish lawyer and a Swiss group that froze Assange's bank account.

So-called "hacktivists" operating under the label "Operation Payback" claimed responsibility in a Twitter message for causing technological problems at MasterCard, which pulled the plug on its relationship with WikiLeaks on Tuesday.

MasterCard said it was "experiencing heavy traffic," but spokesman James Issokson told The Associated Press the company would not confirm whether WikiLeaks was involved. Issokson said MasterCard was trying to restore service Wednesday but was not sure how long that would take. The website's technical problems have no impact on consumers using credit cards, he added.

MasterCard is the latest in a string of U.S.-based Internet companies — including Visa, Amazon.com, PayPal Inc. and EveryDNS — to cut ties to WikiLeaks in recent days amid intense U.S. government pressure.

Visa said it was having no

problems Wednesday.

The online attacks are part of a wave of support for WikiLeaks that is sweeping the Internet. Twitter was choked with messages of solidarity for the group, while the site's Facebook page hit 1 million fans.

Offline, the organization is under pressure on many fronts. Assange is in a British prison fighting extradition to Sweden over a sex crimes case. Moves by Swiss Postfinance, MasterCard, PayPal and others that cut ways to send donations to the group have impaired its ability to raise money.

Undeterred, WikiLeaks released more confidential U.S. cables overnight.

The pro-WikiLeaks vengeance campaign appeared to be taking the form of denial of service attacks in which computers are harnessed — sometimes surreptitiously — to jam target sites with mountains of requests for data, knocking them out of commission.

PayPal's vice president of platform, Osama Bedier, said the company froze WikiLeaks' account after seeing a letter from the U.S. State Department to WikiLeaks saying that "WikiLeaks activities were deemed illegal in the United States."

"It's honestly just pretty straightforward from our perspective," he said, speaking



Claes Borgstrom, centre, lawyer for the two women who claim to have been sexually assaulted by WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange in Sweden in August, talks to media at his office in Stockholm Wednesday, Dec. 8, 2010. Borgstrom, whose office is under police protection, denied that the case had anything to do with WikiLeaks or the current U.S. interest in Assange.

(AP Photo/Anders Wiklund)

at a web conference in Paris. Neither WikiLeaks nor Assange has been charged with any offense in the U.S., but the U.S. government is investigating whether Assange can be prosecuted for espionage or other offenses. Assange has not been charged with any offenses in Sweden either, but authorities there want to question him about the allegations of sex crimes. Per Hellqvist, a security specialist with the firm Symantec, said a network of web activists called Anonymous appeared to be behind many of the attacks. The group, which has previously focused on the Church of Scientology and the music industry, is knocking offline websites seen as hostile to WikiLeaks.

"While we don't have much of an affiliation with WikiLeaks, we fight for the same reasons," the group said in a statement. "We want transparency and we counter censorship ... we intend to utilize our resources to raise awareness, attack those against and support those who are helping lead our world to freedom and democracy."

The website for Swedish lawyer Claes Borgstrom, who represents the two women at the center of Assange's sex crimes case, was unreachable Wednesday.

The Swiss postal system's financial arm, Postfinance, which shut down Assange's bank account on Monday, was also having trouble.

Spokesman Alex Josty said the website buckled under a barrage of traffic.

"Yesterday it was very, very difficult, then things improved overnight," he told the AP. "But it's still not entirely back to normal."

Ironically, the microblogging site Twitter — home of much WikiLeaks support — could become the next target. Operation Payback posted a statement claiming "Twitter you're next for censoring Wikileaks discussion."

Some WikiLeaks supporters accuse Twitter of preventing the term "WikiLeaks" from appearing as one of its popular "trending topics." Twitter denies censorship, saying the topics are determined by an algorithm.

Meanwhile, the French government's effort to stop a company from hosting WikiLeaks has failed — at least for now.

The Web services company OVH, which says a client hosts the wikileaks.ch website, sought a ruling by two courts about the legality of hosting WikiLeaks in France.

The judges said they couldn't decide right away on the highly technical case.

WikiLeaks angered the U.S. government earlier this year when it posted a video showing U.S. troops gunning down two unarmed Reuters journalists. Since then, the organization has leaked some 400,000 classified U.S. war files from Iraq and 76,000

from Afghanistan that U.S. military officials say contained information that could put people's lives at risk.

The latest leaks involve private U.S. diplomatic cables that included frank U.S. assessments of foreign nations and their leaders.

Those cables have embarrassing U.S. allies, angered rivals, and reopened old wounds across the world. U.S. State and Defense department officials say foreign powers have curtailed their dealings with the U.S. government since the documents hit the Internet.

U.S. officials have directed their ire at Assange but even American allies have begun to ask whether Washington shares some of the blame.

"The core of all this lies with the failure of the government of the United States to properly protect its own diplomatic communications," Australian Foreign Minister Kevin Rudd said Wednesday.

"To have several million people on their distribution list for a quarter of a million cables — that's where the problem lies."

The latest batch of cables released Wednesday showed that the British government feared a furious Libyan reaction if the convicted Lockerbie bomber wasn't set free and expressed relief when they learned he would be released in 2009 on compassionate grounds. □

Berkeley may honor Army private accused of leaks

BERKELEY, Calif. — The Berkeley City Council will consider a resolution that would declare the Army private suspected of leaking classified information to WikiLeaks a hero and call for his release.

The council plans a vote Tuesday on the resolution in support of Pfc. Bradley Manning, who is being held in a military brig in Virginia. A city commission already has approved it. Bob Meola, who authored the resolution, tells the San Francisco Chronicle that Manning is a patriot who deserves a medal.

Federal officials have criticized the leaks, saying they could endanger lives.

Leaders of the famously left-leaning city have weighed in on controversial national issues before, including votes to advise that a Marine recruitment office wasn't welcome downtown and to force local compliance with United Nations human rights treaties. □

Doctor charged in Jackson death keeps Nev. License

By KEN RITTER,
Associated Press

LAS VEGAS – The physician criminally charged in the death of pop superstar Michael Jackson is keeping his Nevada medical license.

Deputy Nevada State Board of Medical Examiners chief Edward Cousineau told The Associated Press

on Wednesday that Dr. Conrad Murray admitted to making inaccurate and incomplete statements to the board about being current on child support.

Murray received a reprimand and agreed to pay at least \$3,700 in investigation costs. The board approved the agreement Friday.

Murray spokeswoman Miranda Sevcik says Murray

believed he complied with reporting rules because he was negotiating payments with the mother of his son in California.

A Clark County prosecutor, Gerard Costantian, says the child support case in Nevada is now closed.

Murray has pleaded not guilty in Los Angeles to involuntary manslaughter in Jackson's death. □

Fans remember John Lennon 30 years after his death

By DEEPTI HAJELA
NEKESA MUMBI MOODY,
Associated Press

NEW YORK – John Lennon's fans celebrated his life Wednesday by visiting Strawberry Fields, the Central Park garden dedicated in his

honor, while a newly released interview he gave shortly before his death showed he was optimistic about his future.

On the 30th anniversary of Lennon's murder outside his Manhattan apartment



Gary Dos Santos, left, arranges flowers on the Imagine mosaic in the Strawberry Fields section of New York's Central Park, Wednesday, Dec. 8, 2010, the 30th anniversary of the death of John Lennon.

(AP Photo/Richard Drew)



This photo taken Nov. 19, 2010 in Chicago and provided by Harpo Productions Inc., shows talk-show host Oprah Winfrey announcing on 'The Oprah Winfrey Show' airing, Monday, Dec. 6, 2010, her book club selections, 'A Tale of Two Cities' and 'Great Expectations' by Charles Dickens.

(AP Photo/Harpo Productions Inc., George Burns)

Winfrey has heard the rumors, but denies she's gay

NEW YORK – Oprah Winfrey says she's not a lesbian, not even a little bit.

Her long personal and professional connection with Gayle King has sparked rumors that they are gay, but Winfrey denies it in an upcoming interview with ABC's Barbara Walters.

"I'm not even kind of a lesbian," Winfrey says.

Persistent gossip to the contrary annoys her, she says, explaining that, if it were true, "Why would you want to hide it? That is not the way I run my life."

Asked to describe her relationship with King, Winfrey calls her "the mother I never had, the sister everybody would want. She is the friend that everybody deserves." Winfrey's eyes moisten and her voice chokes as she adds, "I don't know a better person."

Winfrey will end her daytime talk show next spring and, on Jan. 1, is launching a cable channel, the Oprah Winfrey Network.

That new venture has given her moments of panic.

"I would wake up in the middle of the night literally like clutching my chest, like, 'What have I done?'" she tells Walters.

"A Barbara Walters Special: Oprah, The Next Chapter" will air Thursday at 9 p.m. Eastern. □

building, admirers played his music nearby at Strawberry Fields and placed flowers on a mosaic named for his song "Imagine."

The steady stream of visitors represented the range of people who love Lennon, from those who watched his career unfold as it happened to those who know only his music.

Father-daughter pair Paul DeLuca, 50, and Marissa DeLuca, 17, came from Boston to mark the day.

"I grew up with his voice," said Marissa DeLuca.

"The Beatles are the soundtrack to my childhood," she said.

"His voice is just kind of like home."

Her father said, "Nothing is timeless like the stuff John and Paul (McCartney) wrote."

In Liverpool, where Lennon was from, hundreds were expected to gather for a vigil Wednesday around the Peace and Harmony sculpture, recently unveiled by Lennon's

former wife, Cynthia, and their son Julian in Chavasse Park.

In the newly released interview, conducted just three days before he was gunned down, John Lennon complained about his critics — saying they were just interested in "dead heroes" and mused that he had "plenty of time" to accomplish some of his life goals.

The interview, his last, was released Wednesday to The Associated Press by Rolling Stone magazine, which uses the full interview for a story that will be on stands Friday.

While brief excerpts of Jonathan Cott's interview were released for a 1980 Rolling Stone cover story days after Lennon's death, this is the first time the entire interview has been published.

"His words are totally joyous and vibrant and hopeful and subversive and fearless," Cott told the AP on Tuesday. "He didn't mince words."

Lennon saves some of his

harshest words for critics who were perennially disappointed with his music and life choices after he left the Beatles.

"These critics with the illusions they've created about artists — it's like idol worship," he said. "They only like people when they're on their way up ... I cannot be on the way up again."

"What they want is dead heroes, like Sid Vicious and James Dean. I'm not interesting in being a dead (expletive) hero. ... So forget 'em, forget 'em."

He also predicted that Bruce Springsteen, then hailed as rock's bright future, would endure the same critical barbs: "And God help Bruce Springsteen when they decide he's no longer God. ... They'll turn on him, and I hope he survives it."

Lennon also talked about trying to be a good father to his youngest son, Sean, and learning how to relate to a child (he admitted he wasn't good at play). □



Stocks edge higher, Treasurys fall on tax-cut plan

By MATTHEW CRAFT,
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK — The compromise backed by President Barack Obama and Republican leaders on extending tax cuts crushed bonds Wednesday as traders expected the plan to lead to higher budget deficits and a pickup in economic growth. Stocks posted modest gains.

Congressional Democrats could still scuttle the tax agreement, but bond traders are acting like it's a done deal. Treasury prices dropped sharply, sending their yields higher for a second day. The yield on the 10-year Treasury note rose to 3.24 percent, the highest level since June 21 and a huge jump from the 2.93 percent it was trading at Monday before the tax deal was announced.

Part of the reason bonds are selling off is that investors now expect the tax package, which also includes an extension of unemployment benefits, to lead to better growth in the U.S. economy. That means less incentive to keep money parked in ultra-safe investments like Treasurys and also a greater likelihood of inflation, which would erode the value of the fixed payments from bonds.

Economists are already raising their estimates for economic growth as a result of the tax-cut package. Goldman Sachs economists released a rough estimate Wednesday saying that the tax relief could wind up adding between 0.5 and 1 percentage point to economic growth next year.

"There is no question that near term this tax deal will be a net positive for the economy because it will help growth," said Nariman Behravesh, chief economist at IHS Global Insight.

Another reason the tax package is pushing bond prices lower is that it will lead to a greater supply of Treasurys in the marketplace as the U.S. government issues more debt to finance its increasingly large budget deficits. Estimates of the total cost of the tax-cut package vary widely but go as high as \$900 billion over the next few years.

Higher Treasury rates ripple through every corner of the economy, raising borrowing costs for the government, business and consumers. The Treasury Department auctioned another \$21 billion in 10-year notes Wednesday at a rate of 3.34 percent, the highest since May. The

Treasury will sell \$13 billion in 30-year bonds Thursday. Selling long-dated bonds is often tricky: investors like the higher yields, but 30-year bonds would get hit the hardest if inflation picks up.

The Mortgage Bankers Association also reported that mortgage applications slipped last week as refinancing activity fell. The average rate for a 30-year fixed loan rose to 4.66 from 4.56 percent the previous week.

Stock indexes wobbled for most of the day before turning positive in the afternoon.

The Dow Jones industrial average edged up 13.32 points, or 0.1 percent, to 11,372.48.

The broader Standard & Poor's 500 index rose 4.53 or 0.4 percent, to a new yearly high of 1,228.28. The index last traded at this level in late September 2008.

Four of the 10 company groups in the S&P index rose. Financials rose the most with a 1.8 percent gain. Bank of America Corp. rose 3.7 percent to lead the 30 stocks that make up the Dow.

The Nasdaq composite index rose 10.67, or 0.4, to 2,609.16. The higher rates in the Treasury market helped push the dollar up against other currencies including the Japanese yen



FILE - In this file photo taken Dec. 2, 2010, trader James H. Doherty, right, works on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange.

(AP Photo/Richard Drew, file)

and the euro. The dollar rose 0.2 percent against an index of six other major currencies.

In corporate news, McDonald's Corp. fell 1.6 percent to \$78.74, making it the biggest decliner among the 30 stocks that make up the Dow. The company reported November sales figures that fell short of analysts'

expectations.

Fortune Brands Inc. rose 1 percent to \$61.76 after the company announced plans to split into three parts.

Fortune will keep its liquor business led by Jim Beam bourbon while shedding the units that make Titleist golf balls, Moen faucets and Master Locks. □



Jim Beam, Titleist maker to split into 3 companies

By MAE ANDERSON
SARAH SKIDMORE,
AP Business Writers

NEW YORK — Consumer products maker Fortune Brands Inc. plans to split into three companies, keeping its liquor business led by Jim Beam bourbon while shedding the units that make Titleist golf balls, Moen faucets and Master Locks.

Fortune Brands said Wednesday it will focus on its spirits business which generates annual revenue of \$2.5 billion and also includes brands such as Canadian Club and Maker's Mark.

The home and security business, which also includes MasterBrand cabinets, will be spun off on a tax-free basis to

shareholders. The golf business, which also includes FootJoy golf shoes and gloves, will be either spun off or sold.

The announcement comes two months after activist investor William Ackman took an 11 percent stake in the company, becoming its largest shareholder.

Shares rose 63 cents to \$61.78 by midmorning following a spike in premarket trading.

Fortune Brands, based in Deerfield, Ill., said it expects to complete separation planning within several months. The separation is subject to conditions including regulatory approvals.

The company said the plan is the result of its ongoing strategic review over the past

four years.

Fortune Brands was incorporated in 1985 but has its roots in the 19th century American Tobacco Co., which acquired a variety of businesses over the years. It had sold off its tobacco businesses by 1997.

"While the breadth and balance of our portfolio have served shareholders very well, we see the potential for even greater value by separating our businesses into focused companies at a time when they have emerged from the economic downturn in such strong positions," Chairman and CEO Bruce Carbonari said in a statement. □



Germ cops help hospitals prevent infection, death



University of Maryland Medical Center infection control specialist Michael Anne Preas talks with ICU nurses about infection control, Wednesday, Nov. 17, 2010, in Baltimore. Every doctor, nurse and visitor who enters an intensive care patient's room at the University of Maryland Medical Center dons a bright yellow surgical gown and gloves so germs don't spread. Patrolling the ICU like a cop on the beat is an infection preventionist, part of the change under way in U.S. hospitals to slash hospital-spread infections that claim an estimated 99,000 lives a year.

(AP Photo/Rob Carr)

By LAURAN NEERGAARD,
AP Medical Writer

BALTIMORE — This is no ordinary intensive care unit: Every doctor, nurse, friend or loved one must cover their clothes with a bright yellow gown and don purple gloves before entering a patient's room so some scary germs don't hitch a ride in or out.

It's part of the University of Maryland Medical Center's crackdown on hospital-spread infections, and Michael Anne Preas patrols the ICU like a cop on the beat to help keep bacteria in check. You forgot your gloves, Preas leans in to tell a doctor-in-training who's about to examine a man with a breathing tube. Startled, the resident immediately washes his hands and grabs a pair.

Peering at the IV tube inserted into another patient's neck, Preas spots a different opening for bacteria: His long beard is messing up what should be an airtight seal. Let's shave that spot and put in a new catheter, she tells the nurse.

Nor does a janitor escape Preas' inspection. Yes, she put on clean gloves between collecting trash and moving carts that nurses will touch.

Infections caught at health care facilities are one of the nation's leading causes of preventable death, claiming an estimated 99,000 lives a year. Yet chances are you've never heard of Preas' job: She's an infection preventionist, part

of an evolution under way as hospitals are pushed to slash those rates or lose lucrative Medicare dollars.

"You have to be out and about," says Preas, who with a team of four other specialists checks parts of this large Baltimore teaching hospital for infection-control steps, looking to identify the inevitable spots where fast-paced care can allow the bugs an entry. Doctors and nurses are under orders to heed their advice.

The program is unusual. There are only about 8,000 to 10,000 infection preventionists nationwide, and in most smaller hospitals they're occupied with documenting infection statistics or advising doctors about specific pathogens, according to the Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology.

But with some other steps, it's starting to pay off: This surgical ICU has gone 24 weeks without a single case of one of the most insidious hospital infections, where bacteria infiltrate the bloodstream through that easy-to-contaminate IV catheter called a central line. Hospital-wide, those central line infections have dropped 70 percent in the past year.

"Every single nurse and doctor and staff member who touches a patient can either prevent or not prevent an infection from occurring," says chief medical officer Dr. Jonathan Gottlieb. Not too long ago, specialists

like Preas were "prophets in the wilderness," he says, struggling to advise about best practices but not typically at the bedside to see the barriers.

"We can say, 'Do this, do this, do this,' but we have to convince people to change," adds Dr. Kerri Thom, an epidemiologist who accompanies Preas on her daily rounds.

With 1.7 million healthcare-acquired infections a year, adding \$20 billion to the nation's health bills, infections have long plagued hospitals. But they're getting renewed attention as the federal government aims to cut certain types in half in the next few years, linking success to dollars. Already, Medicare has begun cutting payments to hospitals with high rates of certain infections, cuts that will increase by 2015 under the new health care law.

Part of the challenge: For every patient suffering an obvious infection, another five to 10 may carry the same bacteria into the hospital with no symptoms — germs on their skin or in their noses that can threaten the patient in the next room, or even the carrier himself if the bugs slip into the bloodstream through a surgical wound or catheter.

Hence the decision by the University of Maryland Medical Center to have every visitor to a surgical ICU room don a gown and gloves. Researchers found one dangerous germ, acinetobacter, is especially easy to spread — lurking on bed rails and IV pumps and other places that mean even workers not touching the patient could walk out contaminated.

"If we weren't wearing them, it would be on our clothes," Thom says of the protective gear, noting that infection specialists tend not to wear health care's ubiquitous white lab coats. Without frequent washing, "if you wear your lab coat everywhere you go, it becomes a walking germ," Preas adds. □

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daily: 6:15 - 8:45
matinee: 12:45 - 3:30
late show: 11:15
NEW
R

THE TOURIST **STARTS FRIDAY DEC 10**
daily: 5:45 - 8:30
matinee: 12:45 - 3:15
late show: 11:00
NEW
PG-13

HARRY POTTER AND THE DEATHLY HALLOWS
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matinee: 1:00
late show: 11:00
PG-13

JACKASS 3D
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matinee: 1:00 - 3:30
late show: 11:30
R

BURLESQUE
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Reality show seeks Americans to go to Norway

By DAVID BAUDER,

AP Television Writer

NEW YORK – Grant Aaseng lives a quiet life as a Lutheran minister in Alexandria, Minn. He's no celebrity.

Yet the last time he was in Oslo, Norway, the ticket takers and security agents at the airport all recognized him. Children would point him out to parents and say, "Isn't he the guy from TV?" More than 400 Norwegian strangers asked to be his friend on Facebook.

Aaseng's Norwegian fame came from his role as a contestant on "The Great Norway Adventure," a reality show in that country that features Americans who travel to the Nordic nation to compete in good-nature games for a cash prize and the chance to meet ancestors they'd never known.

"It was amazing," Aaseng said. "It exceeded all expectations."

The first version of the show had one of TVNorge's best premiere ratings in 20 years and went on to be a solid hit, said Jerle Nakken, the network's programming chief. The show is now working with a Chicago casting company to find contestants for Round Two. The requirements: Be an American of Norwegian descent who has never traveled to Norway and can take a month away for an adventure.

It is simple fish-out-of-water TV. The show's initial eight contestants were treated to a traditional Norwegian meal that included a porridge one man said "kind of tastes like the glue I used to eat." They sang the Norwegian national anthem before an audience. They competed on Viking fishing boats, tried to herd cows, raced tractors and went cross-country skiing.

One of the oddest episodes replicated the russefeiring, a Norwegian tradition where high school graduates mark a rite



In this undated publicity image released by Monster Entertainment, contestants, front row from left, Flannery Good, of California, Deborah Breberg, of Minnesota, Kari Tauring, of Minnesota, Signe Harri day, of New York, Maia Surace, of Illinois, Grant Aaseng, of Minnesota, and host Henriette Bruusgaard, back row from left, Clinton Admire, of Texas, Joseph Ruud, of Minnesota, Doug Miner, of Washington state, and Matthew Lovik, of California, are shown in Forsand, Norway during the taping of the reality series, 'The Great Norway Adventure 2,' or 'Alt for Norge.' The series follows 12 Norwegian-Americans sent to Norway to compete in a series of extreme cultural challenges. The winner will receive a prize worth \$50,000 and the opportunity to meet Norwegian relatives they don't even know exist.

(AP Photo)

of passage by renting buses for a couple of weeks of rowdy behavior. □

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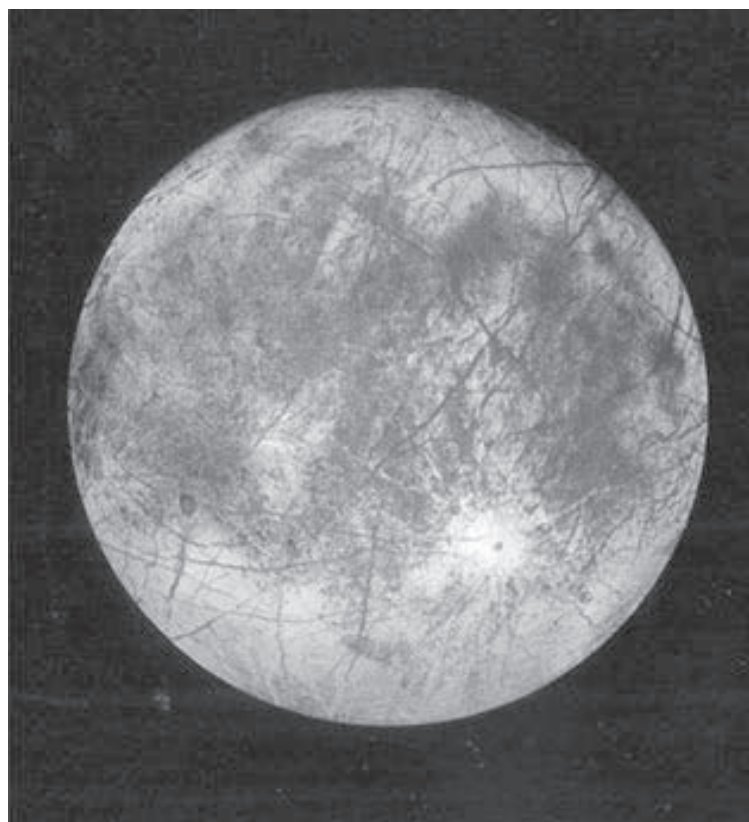
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Evidence for ET is mounting daily, but not proven



FILE - This image, released Nov. 12, 1996, by the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, Calif., shows Jupiter's ice-covered moon, Europa. Every new discovery makes it seem more likely that we are not alone. The case for some kind alien life somewhere else in the universe is steadily building. In the past few days, scientists have revealed there are three times as many stars as they previously thought and that a bacteria can live on arsenic, expanding our understanding of how life can thrive under the harshest and strangest environments. Those came on the heels of the first discovery of a potentially habitable planet.

(AP Photo/Jet Propulsion Lab)

By **SETH BORENSTEIN**,
AP Science Writer

WASHINGTON — Lately, a handful of new discoveries make it seem more likely that we are not alone — that there is life somewhere else in the universe.

In the past several days, scientists have reported there are three times as many stars as they previously thought. Another group of researchers

discovered a microbe can live on arsenic, expanding our understanding of how life can thrive under the harshest environments. And earlier this year, astronomers for the first time said they'd found a potentially habitable planet.

"The evidence is just getting stronger and stronger," said Carl Pilcher, director of NASA's Astrobiology Institute, which studies

the origins, evolution and possibilities of life in the universe. "I think anybody looking at this evidence is going to say, 'There's got to be life out there.'"

A caveat: Since much of this research is new, scientists are still debating how solid the conclusions are.

Another reason to not get too excited is that the search for life starts small — microscopically small — and then looks to evolution for more. The first signs of life elsewhere are more likely to be closer to slime mold than to ET. It can evolve from there.

Scientists have an equation that calculates the odds of civilized life on another planet. But much of it includes factors that are pure guesswork on less-than-astronomical factors, such as the likelihood of the evolution of intelligence and how long civilizations last. Stripped to its simplistic core — with the requirement for intelligence and civilization removed — the calculations hinge on two basic factors: How many places out there can support life? And how hard is it for life to take root? What last week's findings did was both increase the number of potential homes for life and broaden the definition of what life is. That means the probability for alien life is higher than ever before, agree 10 scientists interviewed by The Associated Press.

Seth Shostak, senior astronomer at the SETI

Institute in California, ticks off the astronomical findings about planet abundance and Earthbound discoveries about life's hardiness. "All of these have gone in the direction of encouraging life out there and they didn't have to."

Scientists who looked for life were once dismissed as working on the fringes of science. Now, Shostak said, it's the other way around. He said that given the mounting evidence, to believe now that Earth is the only place harboring life is essentially like believing in miracles. "And astronomers tend not to believe in miracles."

Astronomers, however, do believe in proof. They don't have proof of life yet. There's no green alien or even a bacterium that scientists can point to and say it's alive and alien. Even that arsenic-munching microbe discovered in Mono Lake in California isn't truly alien. It was manipulated in the lab.

But, says NASA astrobiologist Chris McKay, who has worked on searches for life on Mars and extreme places on Earth, "There are real things we can point to and show that being optimistic about life elsewhere is not silly." First, there's the basic question of where such life might exist. Until a few years ago, astronomers thought life was only likely to be found on or around planets circling stars like our sun. So that's where the search of life focused — on stars like ours.

That left out the universe's most common stars: red dwarfs, which are smaller than our sun and dimmer. Up to 90 percent of the stars in the universe are red dwarf stars. And astronomers assumed planets circling them would be devoid of life.

But three years ago, NASA got the top experts in the field together. They crunched numbers and realized that life could exist on planets orbiting red dwarfs. The planets would have to be closer to their star and wouldn't rotate as quickly as Earth. The scientists considered habitability and found conditions near these small stars wouldn't be similar to Earth but would still be acceptable for life.

That didn't just open up billions of new worlds, but many, many times that.

Last week, a Yale University astronomer said he estimates there are 300 sextillion stars — triple the previous number. Lisa Kaltenegger of Harvard University says scientists now believe that as many as half the stars in our galaxy have planets that are two to 10 times the size of Earth — "super Earths" which might sustain life. Then the question is how many of those are in the so-called Goldilocks zone — not too hot, not too cold. The discovery of such a planet was announced in April, although some scientists are challenging that.

The other half of the equation is: How likely is life? Over the past decade and a half, scientists have found Earth life growing in acid, in Antarctica and other extreme environments. But nothing topped last week's news of a lake bacterium that scientists could train to thrive on arsenic instead of phosphorous. Six major elements have long been considered essential for life — carbon, hydrogen, nitrogen, oxygen, phosphorus and sulfur. This changed that definition of life.

By making life more likely in extreme places, it increases the number of planets that are potential homes for life, said Kaltenegger, who also works at the Max Planck Institute in Germany. □

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Presidente Colombia Santos alcanza popularidad de 88%



Imagen de archivo del presidente de Colombia, Juan Manuel Santos, durante una conferencia en Bogotá. REUTERS/Jose Miguel Gomez/ARCHIVO

BOGOTA (Reuters) - El presidente de Colombia, Juan Manuel Santos, tiene una popularidad de un 88 por ciento y un respaldo a su gestión de un 90 por ciento, favorecido por su estilo conciliador en la política internacional y nacional, según un sondeo revelado el miércoles.

En la encuesta del Centro

Nacional de Consultoría (CNC) el 72 por ciento de quienes respondieron el estudio consideró que el mandatario está representando bien sus intereses y el 77 por ciento admitió que ha mostrado interés por cumplir su promesa de no olvidar a los más necesitados.

“El presidente está muy bien posicionado entre la gente, que

reconoce que ha sido acertado. Una cifra del 90 por ciento, yo no la había reportado”, dijo Carlos Lemoine, presidente del CNC. En un sondeo previo realizado por la misma firma en noviembre, Santos registró una popularidad del 87 por ciento. En su primer mes de gestión Santos logró un éxito en política exterior después de que se reunió con el presidente de Venezuela, Hugo Chávez, en un encuentro en el que restablecieron las relaciones diplomáticas y se comprometieron a reanudar el intercambio comercial.

El presidente, un economista y administrador de 59 años, también restableció recientemente las relaciones diplomáticas con Ecuador.

En su segundo mes de Gobierno, Santos logró asestar un duro golpe militar a las FARC, considerada como una organización terrorista por Estados Unidos y la Unión Europea con la muerte del jefe militar del grupo guerrillero Jorge Suárez Briceño, alias El Mono Jojoy.

A nivel interno y con el apoyo de una amplia coalición, el presidente impulsa decisivas reformas fiscales y sociales en el Congreso, con las que busca reducir el desempleo, la pobreza y mejorar la cobertura de salud y educación. La encuesta incluyó 1.000 entrevistas en 38 pueblos y ciudades. □

Critican nombramientos de magistrados en Venezuela

CARACAS (AP) - Diputados oficialistas, altos funcionarios, ex embajadores, y jueces, integran el listado de los nuevos magistrados del Tribunal Supremo que eligió la Asamblea Nacional, en medio de críticas de opositores que aseguran que las designaciones profundizarán la parcialidad del Poder Judicial a favor del presidente Hugo Chávez.

El oficialismo defendió los nombramientos asegurando que los nuevos magistrados cumplieron los requisitos legales, y que la militancia política de algunos no puede utilizarse como limitante porque eso implicaría una “discriminación”.

A escasos días de culminar sus sesiones, el

Congreso, conformado en su mayoría por aliados del gobierno, eligió el martes nueve magistrados principales para un período de doce años, y 32 suplentes por seis años.

La oposición sostiene que los nombramientos se hicieron apresuradamente debido a que el 5 de enero se integrará un nuevo Congreso, en el cual los aliados al gobierno no contarán con los dos tercios de los votos. Pero el oficialismo afirmó que la elección cumplió los lapsos que prevé la Ley del Tribunal Supremo cuyo texto fue ajustado, en lo relativo al proceso de selección, poco después de los comicios legislativos del 26 de septiembre. □

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God saw he was getting tired, When a cure was not to be. So he wrapped his arms around him And whispered Come to Me. In tears we saw him sinking, We watched him fade away. Our hearts were truly broken. He fought so hard to stay. But when we saw him sleeping, Peacefully and free from pain, We could not wish him back, To suffer that again. So keep your arms around him, Lord, And give him special care, Make up for all he suffered, That seemed to us unfair. So many times we've needed him, So many times we've cried. If LOVE could have saved him, HE never would have died!



General Manager Aruba Phoenix Hotel

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Son: Cole John Neophytou

Parents: Mr. Elias & Loulla Neophytou

Brother: James Neophytou & wife Elena

Nephew & God Son: Paul James Neophytou

Niece: Eliana Neophytou

In-Laws: Mr. Jim & Ginny Fraser

Brother in law: Bradley James

Nephew: Justin James

Nonnie: Libera Bortolotti

Close Family Friends & Best Friends:

Dr. Harold & Lydi Hagens

Dr. Patrick & Dorothy Haime

Dr. Timothy & Rosanna Peterson

Mr. Ray & Filomena Perez

Childhood friends in Canada:

Sam, Domenic, Dave, Lance, Bronco, Lucho, Louis, Jamie, Larry & families.

Other close friends elsewhere:

Al & Kathleen, Carmen & Roy, Trish & Larry, Linda & Steve And so many others too numerous to mention.

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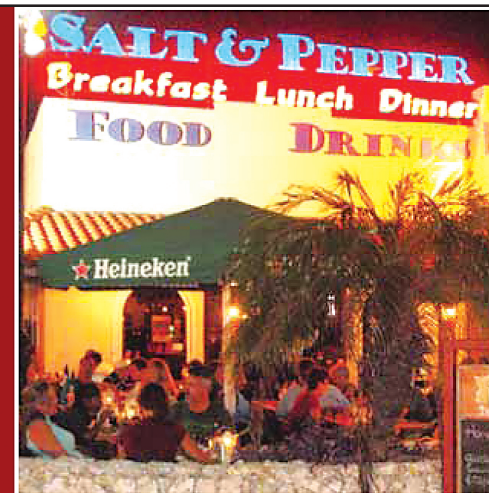
Viewing will take place on Thursday December 9th and Friday December 10th, from 7 to 9 pm at Aurora Funeral Home.

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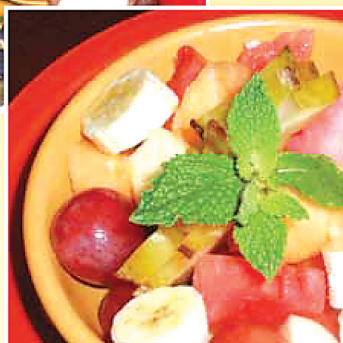


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